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The Deep South Says 'Never'

Yet another unsuccessful attempt to achieve a smooth transformation of Rhodesia into Zimbabwe must be added to the melancholy record of the last 12 years. The immediate cause of the failure may include, for instance, the leak of the Anglo-American plan from some indiscreet talker in Lagos. But a more fundamental reason should be sought in the question: 'What kind of society will emerge when the shake-up is over?'

Mr Andrew Young, as he showed in the remarkable speech that he delivered some weeks ago in Johannesburg, is an advocate of multi-racial capitalism. His outlook springs naturally from his experience in the 'New South' of the United States, where the breakdown of racial barriers has followed from the injection of an industrial boom into a backward farming economy, and especially from the growth of a black middleclass. Indeed, this is why a President who is a white man from Georgia chose as his intermediary with a changing world a black man from Georgia. They concur in believing that black people should be offered a partnership in Africa as in Atlanta. The acceptance of a competitive business structure is implicit; the labels on political regimes are secondary to this assumption, and it is easily conceded that blacks will hold positions of power in proportion to their numbers. What Mr Young says on the platform is endorsed in the boardrooms of the great multinational companies. In July this year, several such companies – American, British and European, and with massive interests in the industries, mines and cash-crop plantations of Africa – sent executives to a seminar (so it was discreetly called) in Geneva to study the advantages of such a perspective.

The calculation is neither stupid nor necessarily hopeless; we have seen the Marxist rulers of Mozambique compelled by sheer necessity to make distasteful compromises. But it takes no account of the emotions of men still engaged in their war of liberation. Robert Mugabe would doubtless retort that he is not sending his young men into battle so that the survivors may serve the projects of ITT or Rio Tinto-Zinc. He wonders what will be the composition of the new army formed after his own forces have been disarmed. And he suspects that the proposed 'development fund' will be used to forestall basic economic change.

If Mr Young's philosophy is too cautious for African revolutionaries, it is too bold for white men whose prejudices are as stubborn as those of the diehards who held the governorships of Georgia and Alabama only ten years ago. Ian Smith, confirmed in power by the votes of white Rhodesians, resolutely declines to vanish from the scene. In the much more formidable bastion of South Africa, Mr Vorster introduces a new constitution excluding Africans from all political rights. Here (the phrase should ring a bell for Mr Young) the Deep South says 'never'.

Mr Vorster has avoided direct conflict with African nationalism (outside his own borders) and has been reluctant to get embroiled in the Rhodesian fighting. However, he has also refused to join the rest of the world in applying sanctions; it is the availability of South Africa as a big brother – export market, trade channel, and source of vital materials – that has made Smith's Rhodesia viable all along. The defect of the Owen-Young approach is that it makes South Africa appear as some kind of impartial mediator. But, in the past few weeks alone, we have had repeated evidence of the horror of Vorster's system. In Soweto, almost every day, the police shoot to kill; 'suicides' of political prisoners tell their ghastly tale; black families by the thousand see their houses burned or bulldozed and are driven into 'homelands' which are no more than starving, neglected reservations. If Mr Vorster wanted to make the change of direction desired by Mr Young (which he does not) his adamantly blinkered supporters would not allow him to. South Africa and Rhodesia alike are committed to a creed that can be vindicated only by brutal repression. Menaced by the revenge of the oppressed, they have gone too far for compromise. They stand or fall together – or at a historically brief interval. If Dr Owen prefers not to recognise that, Mr Vorster knows it.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

In at the Shallow End

I can't dive, so I'm just lowering myself into the swimming pool of the next political year. First I sat on the edge, and let my feet become accustomed to the cold water. Then I inched forward a little and began to soak my knees. My knees began to spread the bad news to the rest of my body, but it was already too late, people were watching, I had to mete out the same punishment to my thighs. Now I am supporting myself by my elbows while the water starts to lap around my – aargh! Gurgle, splutter, phew. (Oh my God.) I say, it's terrific. Come on in. Yes it feels a bit chilly at first, but you'll soon get used to it. A new political year, and how bracing, how invigorating, how freezing it is!

Consider what just *might* happen during the next 12 months. We *might* not get devolved assemblies for Scotland and Wales. We *might* not get direct elections to the European Assembly. We *might* not have a general election. But most interestingly of all, the public argument between Sir Harold Wilson and the nation's security services might not develop into a national scandal which might not engulf the whole Labour movement and much more besides. On this question, I feel helpless to predict. It's a bit like watching a pair of gamblers playing, for increasingly high stakes, a game whose rules are impossible to deduce from the visible activity on the table. We know that Sir Harold has a very conventional cast of mind. It therefore seems utterly out of character for him to speak out publicly against even elements of the secret service. We know that the secret service is supposed to be secret. It therefore seems somewhat out of character for them to inform us (if indeed they have done so) that they were (presumably illegally) bugging the old sod. The article by Andrew Wilson in last Sunday's *Observer* made fascinating reading, on and between the lines. There were two possible conclusions: either there is a big scandal on the way, or there is a very dirty tricks department in operation.

Even before the latest chapter began, there was concern at cabinet level about Wilson's legacy to Labour. Since his resignation, Wilson has behaved rather like the bloodstain in the carpet. Whatever detergent is used, the next morning he reappears. Jim Callaghan may be more successful at inspiring public trust, but he is unlikely ever to engage the public imagination. Wilson still keeps us guessing. Why did he resign? This time last year I should have answered that he saw the impending collapse of sterling. This time this year I'm not so sure. It's a funny thing, sterling. I remember the fury of Crossman, when the Tories floated it: 'The Treasury never allowed *us* to do that,' he said, admiringly. One moment conventional wisdom is absolutely adamant that there is nothing for it, the patient is doomed to immediate extinction. The next moment, without the least suggestion of a raised eyebrow, conventional wisdom reports that all is well. At last year's Labour conference, sterling was the Medusa's head which froze criticism in mid-sentence. This year they'll have to look around for something else.

But the Wilson mystery remains. Has he lost something? What sort of a something? What were all those burglaries about, and who was doing the burgling? And why all this talk of Moscow? It would be ironic, would it not? if Moscow unmade Wilson. It was Moscow that established his reputation as an international politician in the 1945 government. His performance in the trade talks with Mikoyan was the subject of particular praise. 'As soon as the door opened,' said a colleague, 'it was like showing the ideal pond to a very vigorous duck.' Here is the *Observer* of the time:

> Perhaps few people realise that Harold Wilson was under a special temptation during those negotiations. He was a young man just beginning his career: what a triumph to bring back an agreement after so many had failed. In the first round during the summer the temptation must have been insupportable . . . and the question for Wilson was whether he should cable for fresh instructions, urging the cabinet to accept the Soviet terms. He resolutely refused to do so. Courage and strength of character must be added to his proved gift of a quick and brilliant mind.

At the time of the Joe Haines revelations, senior members of the Government were worried about the collapse of that reputation for courage and strength of character. It was bound to reflect badly on Labour politicians in general. How much more worrying then it must be for Callaghan, as he prepares the way for the next election, to watch Sir Harold's slow-motion shoot-out with the 'MI5 Mafia'.

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How hard does Tony Benn work? According to Frances Morrell, very hard indeed. In 'From the Electors of Bristol' (Spokesman Pamphlet 45p), she has analysed a year's correspondence from and to Benn's constituents. We learn that in his work for his constituency alone, Benn received 2,173 letters, and wrote 2,838. This volume of work can apparently be taken as typical, even though Benn himself is not a typical MP. Surprisingly, very few people wrote to him about political matters. Very few of his correspondents mentioned politics at all. For the most part, they wrote requesting his help in some dispute. Two thirds of these disputes were with public officials. We are given an analysis of constituents' problems and the effectiveness of the MP in dealing with them.

The pamphlet, I suppose, is intended to raise the question – is this the best way of organising things? Might it not be more appropriate to improve complaints procedures within the various public bodies, or to shift some of the work-load on to local councillors. (Housing problems accounted for a large number of the disputes.) It must surely be that the number of requests for an MP to act as ombudsman has grown enormously in this century (what would a nineteenth-century MP's post-bag look like, in comparison?) while it is becoming more and more difficult for, say, one man and half a secretary to get through all the work.

Finally, if you like pamphlets with titles like 'The Labour Party: Crisis and Prospects', I have just the thing for you. It's called 'The Labour Party: Crisis and Prospects', by Dianne Hayter (Fabian Tract 451 60p), and no doubt it will be much chewed over in Brighton this year. For my part, however, although I find some of its recommendations interesting ('Annual presentation of a Five Year rolling programme to Conference' – a five year plan every year, hot stuff!), I can't bear this sort of tract. It's full of slack writing and sloppy thinking:

> These are committed socialists, ideologically Labour members, but who are not always so sure that the Labour Party will bring their ideal society nearer. Most, of course, will vote Labour as the party most likely to, and some will be active members. This group is not unimportant. They are not necessarily left wing,

but hang on, I thought they were committed socialists –

> but comprise those with a particularly clear and well formulated vision of the sort of policy they want implemented.

Aha! I see what she's getting at.

> Many of these are our MPs and leaders. Others never quite commit themselves to Labour. But all need to (and usually do) recognise that the difference between socialism and democratic socialism is that the latter demands widespread support.

At this point Dianne Hayter loses me. To distinguish between socialism and a democratic form of it is like distinguishing between omelettes and omelettes made from eggs. Miss Hayter's tract presents a ponderously reasoned case for making omelettes out of eggs, or at least – since politics is the art of the possible – *diluting* them with eggs. A very Fabian sort of argument, a good beginning to the political year.

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Patrick Wintour

Bored Enough to Riot

Inspector Francis Wilkinson of Notting Hill Gate police station wrote to *The Times* on 8 September 1976 warning that if the carnival 'goes ahead next year, it will be an occasion of hate and violence'. For the most part it turned out to be nothing of the sort. Sitting in a café on Tuesday morning Ben, the owner of a jewellery shop who had lost over £10,000 through damage and stolen goods, told me that he thought '99 per cent of the people came to have a good time and had succeeded in doing that despite the other 1 per cent of troublemakers'. Selwyn Baptiste, chairman of the Carnival Development Committee described the carnival as 'magnificent; last year there was war, this year there was no war'. Deputy Commissioner David Helm called it 'a step in the right direction'. Whatever your yardstick the police policy of containment had been the best one available.

Doubtless there will now be more calls to imprison the carnival in the White City. But it would be as appropriate as playing the Cup Final in a school playground. The setting of the carnival, the inhabitants' transformation of their own streets, is an integral part of the enjoyment and has been ever since carnival began in Trinidad. The magazine *Race Today*, and along with it the West Indian community, regard the carnival as 'the most important, independently organised, social and political activity by West Indians in Britain'. The battle to keep carnival is part of a wider battle for status.

Once the police had to accept that the carnival would not stop after 1976, they found themselves in the awkward dilemma of their own presence at the 1977 carnival constituting one of the biggest threats to law and order – the military-style operation of 1976, about which there had been no warning, had seen to that. In the weeks before the 1977 carnival, many blacks were intensely suspicious of police plans. Scotland Yard refused to divulge them as it was an 'operational matter'. Many thought the police would be out for blood after the battering they had received from young blacks last year. A letter was leaked from Notting Hill police station asking for 'a riot-type crash helmet'. Shopkeepers were told by police to board up shops and keep milk bottles off the streets. The four leading local black organisations, Unity Association, Caribbean Cultural International, Black Liberation Front and Black People's Information Centre declared:

> The indications we in the black community have been able to get strongly suggest that the police are coming again to our carnival and coming for a war of revenge . . . the black community is not asking for no-go areas. What we do say is that we have a perfect right to peaceful assembly in the streets of London and that any attack upon us when we exercise that right is lawless even if carried out by the Metropolitan Police Force.

If the police were seen to provoke anything, not just black schoolkids were going to be involved.

In the event the police, by their own admission, came in heavier numbers (I myself counted 17 SPG vehicles in one street) but by sticking to quiet back streets they had accepted both that a massive police presence would be a bad case of gatecrashing and that they simply did not have the confidence of the blacks. So along the carnival route the two committees' stewards and the crowds policed themselves. Around the steel band procession, which effectively are the carnival, there was no ugliness.

But along Acklam Road there is a small string of short-lease houses inhabited by up to 30 different voluntary and community organisations. At the end of the row there is Ronnie Briggs's garage and record shop. Throughout Sunday and Monday the shop

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blazed out reggae music and on the Sunday similiar 'static sounds' came also from the cavernous space underneath the Westway flyover. Reggae is a natural gathering point for rebellious black youngsters, whether they are attracted to Rastafarian religious beliefs or the 'police and thieves' image of a sub-culture. Many stood under the Westway on both days utterly uninterested by the traditional Trinidadian street bands and dancers who were wending their way through the surrounding streets. They did not participate even to dance to the giant amplifiers. They chose to get bored and wait for dusk and a riot.

On Sunday evening the area under the Westway became a no-go area for whites; at police bidding the Carnival & Arts Committee removed the amplifiers on the next day. They were reluctant to do so. One of the many divisions between the two committees over the last six months was the CAC's insistence that the carnival should be placed in a London context and that it should cater for the needs of young blacks both in the music it offered and by providing jobs for local kids through the year. As Alderman Weekes (the sole black member of Kensington and Chelsea Council) described it, 'carnival is about more than jumping up behind a steel band two days in a year'. The Carnival Development Committee whose members almost exclusively originate from Trinidad, the mecca of the carnival, and who are mainly supported by the steel bands, feel threatened by those who might turn it into a Jamaican 'festival of reggae'. If the committees had not been divided over adapting carnival 'to a strange land', and also over the issue of accountability to the community, then perhaps more diverting entertainment could have been arranged for the young.

As it was, there was no music at all on Monday night for the young as they gathered in the gloom of the Westway. Therefore they had developed their own entertainment as they chased innocent tourists or ghoulish cameramen who had strayed too far. The girls scrambled clear with giggly screams, as if they were on a beach running back from a wave, as the boys darted through the crowds, sometimes frightening people for fun but at other times in vicious earnest. The sport made a mockery of *Socialist Worker*'s claim that the 'police are the real muggers'. Time and again, the CAC's stewards, many of them local militants who have worked against police harrassment of blacks, waded into the crowd to weed out the rough and protect the innocent. Eventually the kids, many from south of the river, turned on the Notting Hill stewards. Once the cans gave way to bricks the steward's avowed aim of policing their own community at their own cultural event had to be abandoned as unreal. It was not their own community and it was no longer a cultural event. The previous week's arguments about liquor licences, toilets, routes, about what was to be open and what was to be shut became irrelevant.

But the committees' chief concern, over the lack of finance, has been vindicated. To run an event which takes a year to prepare and which persistently attracts 250,000 people, the organisers had received less than £10,000 – a tenth of what they requested. Consequently, there was no money for sufficent stewards. At the CAC's last meeting the borough council excused their refusal to contribute by saying that they 'intended to give only a token sum anyway and that now it was too late'. Through 1977 the prevarication of Kensington and Chelsea Council, on the pretext that there were two committees, put a stop to all the other funding bodies. So all the organisation had to be telescoped into the last few months.

Avoidable or not, the organisers' inability to influence or entertain the gangs may help to build bridges between black leaders and the police. Just as the police learned some lessons in 1976 so now West Indians have learnt the police are capable of co-operation. However, the police mainly picked up bouquets from the blacks for keeping out of sight. 'P' Division were receiving less praise for their apparently unnecessary assault on the Mangrove Restaurant on Monday night which led to a series of injuries. And it will be a different matter again if the police interpret the gang's two-day display of lawlessness as giving them *carte blanche* to use even more dubious methods and charges against young blacks. The fear that this may happen perhaps explains the increasingly desperate tactics of the stewards as the climatic riot neared. For they, as much as the police, will have to live with the repercussions.

Christopher Hitchens

High Camp in Rhodesia

The news may be tough on all fronts, but white Rhodesian morale is a law unto itself. Not many people may associate the Salisbury suburbs with high camp, but the doubters should have been here last Saturday, when an unofficial American Embassy was opened by Robin Moore, chubby Gung-Ho author of *The Green Berets* and *The French Connection*. All the ingredients were there: a fine house, a good lawn, and a pool surrounded by jacaranda trees. And had not Moore, only the night before, referred to Andrew Young as 'the President's big nig' on Rhodesian television? We were all set.

The occasion was also in honour of the 200 Americans and assorted others who have come to fight in Rhodesia. There were detachments from the crack Selous Scouts, and other tough anti-guerrilla units. Horses and attack dogs were put through their paces. Not all the guests were foreign. A number of Rhodesian fighters were there too, and several of these were black. Talking to them proved easy. They had little respect for the fighting capacity of their nationalist opponents, regarding themselves as more professional. They said they were soldiers first, and would be prepared to fight for any Rhodesian government. A government of the Patriotic Front? Laughter. Then 'Why not?'.

Vietnam ribbons were prominent on the American veterans. Air Lieutenant Hubert Kirkendall was taciturn at first, but emerged as a poor Texan with strong views. 'I should give a damn for these rich guys with their farms and their dough. But I'm fighting with them because they're white, and the white man is running out all over. The Blacks think we owe them a living.' The strange thing was, Hubert Kirkendall didn't think he was on the winning side. 'But,' he said, 'if I'm last man out I'll turn off the lights.'

It has been a confusing week for the whites. On Monday night Ian Smith addressed a packed meeting of the Rhodesian Front. He was preceded by a wing-commander and a businessman, and chaired by a major. If it had not been for his distinctive voice, one could have imagined oneself at a rural Tory rally. There were even Monday Club hecklers accusing him of a sell-out, in the shape of Rhodesian Action Party members. The intensely loyal audience gave them short shrift, but Smith had his work cut out to reassure the faithful about his intentions. At one point he told them that he would love to be able to lock up the nationalist troublemakers again, but that 'our few friends abroad' would not allow it. He denounced 'one man one vote' in the traditional terms ('one man one vote one time') in which it is scorned here. He made it clear how unpalatable he was finding the task of repealing certain discriminatory laws. But his realism was uppermost, and one could sense the troubled audience groping their way to and not around the coarse fact that there are more black people here than white.

Indeed, the balance is shifting and Smith knows it. The exodus of white citizens is reaching awkward proportions. The guerrillas still try to avoid direct clashes with the security forces, but they have made certain areas unsafe and are well equipped. The call-up is a burdensome and risky thing, and is taking its toll not so much of morale as of time and resources.

African leaders, meanwhile, regard the white election as an irrelevance, as they do the referendum that will follow it. They see everybody else having their say, while perhaps the most politicised black population in Africa is kept in silence. When I saw Bishop Abel Muzorewa he was laughing at Smith's manoeuvres with the tribal chieftain, and sceptical of his promise of a 'broad-based' government. From the Bishop's point of view, the longer the franchise is delayed the more time there is for Zambia and other African governments to back up the Patriotic Front and short-circuit the mass parties in Rhodesia itself. And he is not the only person here who finds it ironic that Dr David Owen and Andrew Young are in effect running messages for Vorster and the South African Government, whose weight is considerable in Salisbury and whose patience is wearing

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thin. Who would have thought, in the brave days of HMS *Tiger*, that it would come to this?

It doesn't take much in the way of diplomatic training to detect that Smith's five points are incompatible with any conceivable permutation of internal and external African views. For one thing, – a point not generally made – every African can now see the end of white government as a possibility in his lifetime, if not much sooner. Putting it mildly, this removes the incentive for even the most conservative and conciliatory leader to associate himself with any settler ruler, let alone Smith. This goes some way to explaining the bewildering fashion in which last year's 'moderate' (or 'sell-out') becomes this year's 'militant' (or 'red puppet'). Joshua Nkomo is a case in point, as he has been every year since 1961. If one phrase sticks in the mind it is Muzorewa's sermon at the Geneva Conference on turning the other cheek. His reasoning was that Christian Africans ought to do so – but that they were not obliged to do it more than once.

Back to our theme. White morale is an odd mixture. There is genuine resilience behind it, but it often divides into alternates of bravado and cynicism. To hear Robin Moore on his lawn praise the American contingent in conventional John Birch terms ('Macarthur could have won in Korea if he'd been allowed to') is to hear the first. To hear the Rhodesian Action Party call Ian Smith 'The Führer' is to hear the second. These are the men who signed the 1965 UDI, who urged Smith on to ever more acts of international and internal defiance, who thought tomorrow would never come. Their rage now is the fury of Caliban seeing his face in the glass.

The most common white consolation argument, however, is that nobody knows Rhodesia like they do. The foreign questioner meets the accusation of his own inexperience every day. To this one, at least, the point is unconvincing. Rhodesia has become one of those tragedies where the spectator already knows more than the players do, and where only the dénouement remains. Some whites go so far as to admit it. They can remember the warnings they got from Garfield Todd and Guy Clutton Brock nearly two decades ago. Now, in the name of their rebellion, they are asked to accept, under guerrilla pressure, the removal of the Land Tenure Act, the rescinding of public racial discrimination and the release of the detainees. This week will be remembered in white Rhodesia as the time it dawned on some of them that the 12 years of UDI have not been worth it.

Salisbury

John Griffith

Grunwick through the Looking Glass

All right-thinking men and women (which includes you and me) are delighted that Lord Scarman and his two wingmen (representing the TUC and CBI) have given the judgment of their court of inquiry in favour of the strikers and their union and against Grunwick, its leaders and supporters. Left and Liberal opinion applauds, with the Conservatives (even, so far, Mr Heseltine) keeping careful hush. The union, you will remember, had said they would accept the finding whereas Grunwick had reserved their position.

'Our contribution to a settlement', says the report*, 'is primarily one of informing public opinion. We propose, therefore, to state the facts, to assess them . . . and to suggest a possible reconciliation of two apparently irreconcilable points of view.' So the primary purpose of giving factual information was at once extended to the making of recommendations. And, whether Scarman likes it or not, these recommendations are 'primarily' what the report will be used for. It is very difficult to see how the recommendations – especially those calling for the reinstatement of the dismissed staff or their cash compensation by the company – can conceivably be a possible reconciliation since reinstatement or no reinstatement was what the two sides were being irreconcilable about. Scarman found the company to be the guilty party:

> The company by dismissing all the strikers, refusing to consider the reinstatement of any of them, refusing to seek a negotiated settlement to the strike and rejecting ACAS offers of conciliation, has acted within the letter but outside the spirit of the law. Further, such action on the part of the company was unreasonable when judged by the norms of good industrial relations practice . . . The policy of the law is to exclude 'trade disputes' from the judicial review by the courts and to rely not on the compulsory processes of the law but on the voluntary approach backed by advice, conciliation and arbitration to promote good industrial relations.

In a word, the company acted legally but unreasonably. It might have been better had the report stopped there, strictly within its terms of reference which were 'to inquire into the causes and circumstances of, and relevant to, the dispute . . .? and to report'. Those terms did not require the making of recommendations. Nor did they, on their face, invite the Scarman court to speculate on the 'policy' or the 'spirit' of the law.

But at the heart of Scarman's recommendation there is a logical flaw of serious dimensions or, at least, a profound ambiguity. The crucial sentences in the report read:

> In the conduct of industrial relations in this country, and no matter what the legalities are, it is the exception rather than the rule for employees who are dismissed during the course of a strike not to be re-engaged *after the dispute is ended*. Ideally in our view Grunwick should *therefore* offer re-employment to all those strikers who *before the dispute* were full time employees of the company and who wish to be taken back. [My italics.]

This seems fatally to confuse two situations. The first is the common one where there is a dispute about wages or conditions of work, as a result of which a strike is called. No one is dismissed, the dispute is settled, and the strikers go back to work. The second is the unusual Grunwick situation where the dispute, whatever its beginnings, *is about the reinstatement* of strikers who have been dismissed within a few days of their striking. In this second case, the Scarman recommendations for reinstatement concern not, as he says, what should happen after a dispute is ended, but the terms on which the dispute is settled. In these circumstances the Scarman argument, based on what usually happens *after* a dispute is settled, is irrelevant and misleading.

So the reason for the recommendation of reinstatement cannot be that strikers are normally reinstated after disputes have been settled. The reason is twofold: that it was unreasonable ('extremely rare in practice' said Scarman) to dismiss strikers; and that the company acted contrary to 'the spirit' or 'the policy' of the law.

Now had the union or the strikers, instead of Grunwick, been condemned by Scarman for acting legally but contrary to that spirit or that policy, I would for good radical reasons have become extremely alarmed. The law I will keep or take punishment if I break it. But I do not have to suffer the rebukes of the great and the good for having infringed their view of the law's policy or spirit.

The function of a court of inquiry, when both sides agree to be bound, wholly or substantially, by its findings, is to arbitrate and to seek a solution which will be reasonably acceptable. But when one side says in advance that it will not be bound, the function is quite different. The findings of the court, in so far as they are adverse to the non-consenting party, then become a form of political pressure.

Unfortunately courts of inquiry, especially when presided over by judges, at this point too often feel obliged to dress up their political findings and their political pressures in the language of mystification. So Scarman associated the stance of Grunwick – as well as that of the union – with articles of the European Convention on Human Rights, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Social Charter, and then added, mystifyingly, that all the rights and freedoms enshrined therein were 'recognised by English law'.

Not content with this, as we have seen, he proceeded to invoke the metaphysical 'spirit' and 'policy' of the law. As so often happens in British politics the impression given is that it is all done by mirrors. So Grunwick, instead of emerging from the inquiry merely as a bad employer, ready to dismiss employees who protested, becomes magnified into a fighter for freedom who mistook the ethos of his times. And all for want of a little plain English and the avoidance of conceptual generalities.

It seems improbable the Scarman court has improved the prospects of a settlement of the dispute. Certainly it has provided pseudo-legal and pseudo-philosophical explanations of its continuance.

*Cmnd 6922 HMSO 50p.

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Jeremy Potter*

The Case for ITV-2

'Any broadcasting service must be judged by the quality of its programmes.' Thus Annan, and who would disagree? By that criterion Britain has the two best television services in the world, despite forecasts that ITV would drag the BBC down to unmentionable depths. In fact, competition has raised standards on both sides, and ITV's programmes are now matching the BBC's in a remarkable run of international award-winning. But ITV without a second channel is handicapped: one cannot run a truly comprehensive service on one channel, nor compete adequately with one against two.

The composition of the Annan Committee did not appear to favour ITV (ITV Viewers 1, The Rest 15), but the committee acknowledged ITV's performance handsomely: 'The achievement and success of the British system of organising commercial broadcasting ought not to go unrecorded.' 'The network does a good job in providing entertainment and excitement. What is more, the TV companies now produce programmes which in prestige and intrinsic worth in a particular range are the equal of the BBC's output.' 'There is one department in which the commercial sector has by common consent surpassed the BBC. That is in the presentation of news.'

It is strange, then, that Annan did not recommend an ITV-2, particularly as the kind of programmes the committee wished to see on the fourth channel were those which – long before Annan – ITV had been saying it would provide. Not only that, but Annan proposes a competitive fourth channel using ITV facilities and screening a large number of ITV programmes (presumably like some overflow of NEW STATESMAN articles appearing in a new *Spectator*). It seems, however, that in the course of its exploration into the darkest interior of broadcasting, the committee stumbled on a sinister and hitherto undiscovered garment, the 'straitjacket of duopoly', and this has become the battle standard of the anti-ITV lobby – a lobby which formerly failed to detect any straitjacket in a BBC monopoly. The real straitjacket today is, of course, the wholly unnecessary restriction of ITV to one channel, resulting in frustration and lack of opportunity for creative and other workers in television and deprivation for the viewer. Channel 4 has been 'waiting for Annan' for years, with a fourth knob mouldering away on all our sets.

ITV and its plans for ITV-2 have encountered such a barrage of misrepresentation from the high-minded that a few facts may prove helpful. First, when it is argued that in good years ITV companies make high profits it should also be mentioned that the taxpayer is the main beneficiary. Not only does every penny of the licence fee go to the BBC, but more than £4 out of every £5 of ITV profit goes to the Treasury. Thus the higher ITV's profits the more the taxpayer should rejoice.

Secondly, ITV-2 is likely to cost the public nothing. The levy payable by ITV may be reduced for two or three years, but as soon as the channel goes into profit (forecast for the fourth year) levy payments will actually increase and the taxpayer will be in credit. It has been argued too (by Lord Vaizey to the Royal Television Society) that ITV-2 would be of general benefit to the economy – in the creation of new jobs and as a stimulus to business activity through additional programme-making and a new outlet for advertising.

Thirdly, ITV is not a monolith. The programme-providers are a federal conglomeration of 15 separate companies plus a co-op (ITN), all very different in size, complexion and attitude. The plurality and diversity which are sought for the fourth channel already exist within the ITV system. Fourthly, it is not the companies but the other wing of ITV which Parliament would authorise to run ITV-2. The Independent Broadcasting Authority is a public authority whose members are appointed by the Home Secretary and who exercise control through a secretariat of public servants.

Fifthly, neither the IBA nor the companies plan 'more of the same' for ITV-2. Both have published their programme plans for the fourth channel. The IBA's appear in *Independent Broadcasting* (July 1977). A substantial proportion of production time will be devoted to programmes from the major ITV companies (as in the Annan proposal), but access to the screen for independent productions will be ensured through a special Council. There will be allocations of time to education, to the regional companies, to ITN and to sport. In broad terms, the IBA sees ITV-1 remaining as now: two-thirds entertainment and one-third serious; while ITV-2 is two-thirds serious and one-third entertainment.

The plans of the companies also envisage programming for minorities and low audience ratings. They differ from the IBA's but not by much. The companies would allocate a block of peak-period time to an Independent Programme Board, in the belief that this would provide the most effective guarantee of independence, whereas the IBA prefers independent productions to form part of the general schedule and not be confined to what might come to be seen as a ghetto. That apart, the companies set great store by closely complementary scheduling between ITV-1 and ITV-2, with common time-junctions and a real choice for the viewer.

A word about education. In the provision of schools programmes, ITV and the BBC each make an unacknowledged contribution of between £1m. and £2m. a year to the nation's educational budget. In addition to other programmes of broader educational content screened on the three channels, BBC-2 carries more than 30 hours a week of programmes for the Open University, which is now seeking more than 50, and the BBC is, reasonably enough, looking to the fourth channel to share this commitment. One prods sacred cows at one's peril, but if I may venture a quick poke in the ribs here, to use television facilities available in nearly 20 million homes in order to get a few thousand, and in some cases a few hundred, people through a particular course of study is a grave misuse of a mass medium.

The IBA is attracted to the socially much more desirable Open College concept – courses in numeracy and literacy, vocational training for school-leavers and the unemployed, and other forms of further education. The companies recognise that there will be educational programmes of some kind on ITV-2 but want any decision on its nature and extent to await an investigation which would consider the future of educational broadcasting on all channels. One question is this: would schools not be better served by video-cassette recorders? By that method programmes could be run and recorded during the night and be available for use at will instead of at set times. Whatever the conclusion, there is no cause for doubt about ITV-2's commitment to education. There are many educationalists in ITV and the upper reaches of the IBA are well stocked with them.

Annan's vision of a controlling body for the fourth channel is a new Open Broadcasting Authority. This is an imaginative concept which has been widely criticised as impractical, illogical, potentially damaging to programme standards and/or yet another burden to be imposed on the taxpayer. Furthermore, Annan does not visualise this fourth channel becoming operative in the foreseeable future and the plan is therefore in effect an invitation to government to delay still further. This has been recognised by unions and creative staff in broadcasting, and it is significant that unions such as ACCT and the NUJ, looking for new jobs and opportunities for their members, have come out against an OBA and in favour of an ITV-2.

The inadequacy of Annan's research has attracted criticism too (not least from members of the committee itself). The value of its research findings which have been triumphantly misreported as proving that the public does not favour a fourth channel of any kind may be judged by the researchers' own caveat: 'It is, of course, notoriously difficult to ask people's opinions of things which they have not experienced, and we cannot conclude from data of this kind that people would actually watch the programmes which they say they would like, or would not watch services which they reject.'

The lure of the OBA idea lies in the half-promise of permissiveness: that it would not really be an Authority at all, but a Non-Authority. No more tiresome BBC or IBA rules: no binding requirement for programmes to be balanced or impartial; no restrictive codes on violence or bad language. Annan is studiously unclear about sanctions in the event of abuse or offence, except for the nuclear deterrent that the OBA

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EXCLUSIVE

Alice and the Wasp in a Wig

4th September – frabjous day! This Sunday, a suppressed passage from *Through The Looking Glass*, missing for over 100 years, is to be published in the Telegraph Sunday Magazine.

The passage is a complete 1,400-word episode, containing a typical Lewis Carroll rhyme, and introducing a new character – a wasp in a wig.

The wig is important. Tenniel – Alice's illustrator – could be difficult if he chose, and he did choose: 'a *wasp* in a *wig* is altogether beyond the appliances of art'. (His italics). That from the hand that drew Rocking-horse-flies... but it proved to be a knock-down argument. Carroll dropped the section.

What might Tenniel have drawn? Peter Blake, Sir Hugh Casson, Patrick Procktor, and Ralph Steadman each supplies his own vision of the episode. And the feature reproduces the actual proofs, corrected in Carroll's hand.

But was the episode vintage Carroll, or only missing – but never missed? Professor Morton Cohen's accompanying article makes no doubt of its genuine importance.

4th September
TELEGRAPH
SUNDAY MAGAZINE
Make a memorandum of it!

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'would soon lose its remit from Parliament'. In practice, though, what day-to-day rules and safeguards would an OBA have and how could they possibly differ significantly from the IBA's? Like it or not, the OBA is a dream unrelated to reality.

Worse still, the introduction of a third force in television would intensify the 'battle of the ratings', about which Annan expresses such concern. ITV and BBC can live together with a roughly equal share of the audience – say ten points either side of 50/50. But a new channel which had to justify its existence from a different financial base would put at risk all that is most precious: the quality of the programmes on all channels. These are not circumstances in which more competition would lead to higher standards. As an adjunct of ITV-1, ITV-2 could live profitably with a very small share of the audience: it would be the company, not the channel, which would have to remain in profit. Any competitive service, starting from scratch and having to stand on its own feet financially, would need a much higher share of the audience, and the effect of rival channels financed by advertising would introduce just that aspect of the commercial element in television which the present set-up has so carefully avoided.

A friend of mine was once fishing in Ireland in fine drizzle – ideal weather for angling. Suddenly the clouds began to disperse. 'Oh sir,' exclaimed the ghillie, looking at the sky in dismay, 'the weather is improving for the worse.' This phrase seems an apt description of much of Britain's history in recent years. Education has been improved for the worse; so have the social services and local government; and much else besides. The BBC's external services are now in the tumbril, along with the diplomatic service and the British Council, all under threat of improvement. What lies behind this misguided activity? In the interests of both viewsr and broadcasters, let us hope that television will be allowed to improve an already first-class service for the better. This will come through the natural development of an ITV-2 and not by having a well-intentioned spanner thrown into the works in the form of an OBA.

During the last 20 years, watching ITV has become a major source of enjoyment for the vast majority of Labour supporters, and with hindsight one can appreciate just what a mistake the Labour Party made in opposing its introduction. Must a similar mistake be made with ITV-2, and the credit for a piece of popular and sensible legislation again handed to the Conservatives? 'What,' writes Annan, 'could have been easier in the short term and cheaper in terms of public expenditure than to have recommended that the fourth channel should be allocated to the IBA for a second ITV service?' What indeed? And in the long term too.

Phillip Whitehead*

The Alternative to ITV-2

Any committee of inquiry, like Annan, goes through an awkward period after it has reported. This is not just the result of its logic being remorselessly scrutinised and its very punctuation held up to question, should a colon be misplaced. It is also because all the submissions it has received, sifted, and in some cases rejected, rise up again as fresh or revamped pleas to the Government. For the now disbanded committee they become a kind of waking nightmare, the undead for whom there can be no stake through the heart.

Nowhere is this more true than with the case the television companies are once again making for what they are pleased to call 'ITV-2'. The companies fail to see how it can be possible to praise much of their output – and indeed to acknowledge that it is done within the restriction of one channel against two for the BBC – yet deny them their territorial claims. I do not see why. The Annan notion of pluralism was not some modish gesture or pat phrase. It sprang from the realisation that broadcasting should be less and less the talisman of professional elites, helping them to mediate every impulse and aspiration of a society. A generation is growing up which is switched in to the newer media, which knows there are many minorities counted in millions who get token appearances at the insomniacs' hour and nothing else from the masters of mass audience scheduling. It is an audience in part for improvement but also for entertainment and information which reflect the world as it is, and not the consensual formulae which much of television (like the press) thinks it must live by. In the press these formulae are dominant, overground, as bland, firm and upstanding as anything you can see on page 3. It is less so in broadcasting. But balance, safety first, the appeal of the true and tried formulae, do not disappear because the organisations concerned trumpet their independence and their world reputation. It is a problem for the BBC, and will increasingly be so for ITV. It is not solved by widening ITV's share of the spectrum.

The fourth and last UHF channel being available for allocation, Annan had an opportunity not available to our colleagues on the Royal Commission on the Press. He could open up the system, bring in new forces for the sake of innovation and vitality. The answer had to be in part a structural one, which nevertheless accepted that much of the existing broadcasting system would remain. Those who attack the report as too visionary, or as change for change's sake, overlook what a conservative document it is. It builds on the existing tradition, extends or adapts the existing institutions. But is does not go so far as allowing their institutional survival to determine the future shape of broadcasting.

Of course it would be easy to fall for the companies' line of patter. The fourth button on the set is ours, they say. Why, we invested in it. No TV service can function today unless it offers the viewer complementary services, and ours would cost the public nothing. If you do not give it to us we shall stagnate; we must expand. And the whole package can come to you courtesy of the IBA, who already run one channel, without creating another wasteful bureaucracy. There are powerful key words in all that to light up many a reflex; cheap, easy, fair, job-creating. But Annan was asked to do more than that. Such evidence as could be accumulated suggested that people did not want more of the same. Our estimates of future population and set-owning patterns suggested that they would need different things as well, which the logic of two-by-two competition denies them.

It is that logic which is the 'straight-jacket of duopoly', in the phrase which so enraged the companies and the IBA. Yet their every gesture since indicates the assumption that there are two ways and two ways only of running broadcasting – the present ways. Sir Brian Young, in his Granada lecture, poured all his eloquent scorn on the idea of new regulatory bodies, indifferent to the fact that most of it could have once been said of the organisation which employs him. He has always seemed a step closer to the companies than is good for him, and has gone along with the many variants of 'ITV-2' until the latest. But now a gap is opening up between the IBA and the companies. Looking at their proposals, shamelessly trailed in *TV Times*, one can see why. For here were schedules which ignored educational programming, which shifted some of the more demanding programmes across from ITV-1, which gave a mere six hours a week to independent programming and abandoned that support for a Foundation which had been the token gesture of the submission by the Independent Television Companies Association to Annan.

Why were they so blatant? Almost certainly because they saw the fourth channel coming their way without a fight. Julian Critchley for the Tories was announcing they could have it in the very hour of publication of the Annan Report. No problem there. The major union in ITV, the ACTT, with its quite legitimate concern for jobs in the present economic climate and its built-in fear of casualisation, has settled for a sweetheart contract with the companies. The companies, perhaps, may have thought that if Alan Sapper and Julian Critchley are with you, who can be against you? Of course, the derision which greeted their proposals has forced further cosmetic changes. Education and minority programming are now talked of again. If a Tory election victory recedes in probability, or if the Tories become embarrassed at what they are committed to support, still more piety will be the order of the day. It should be greeted with a proper scepticism.

Annan wanted the fourth channel to be

Phillip Whitehead MP, a member of the Annan Committee, has worked as a producer for both BBC and ITV.

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something new, run on different assumptions. The first assumption was that it should be seen as bringing innovation to all our television output, and complementary in that sense to all the three existing channels, not just an adjunct of one. Whereas ITV-2 would (on the evidence of the schedules) offer us at best an *ersatz* BBC-2, neatly blocked out in similar slots of time, mindful of the need to boost audiences on ITV-1, we saw the fourth channel as having a different approach to scheduling. That is why we wanted the Open Broadcasting Authority to see itself as much more of a publisher, regulated more by the law of the land than by special, fearful statutes, acknowledging the maturity of the medium as well as the true diversity of society. Again, Sir Brian Young poured scorn on this. Yet his own IBA proposals (in attempting to incorporate the OBA idea) talk of a council for independent productions sifting through ideas 'just as a book-publisher has to select from the manuscripts submitted to him'. Just so, and that is what the OBA would do.

Where would the programme-controller of the OBA get his programmes? How would he go about it? He would not shut the ITV companies out. In so far as their federal structure inevitably makes for unused capacity and underemployed talent he would be able to seek from them a variety of programmes which they could not show, or would not launch, within the assumptions of mass-audience scheduling. This could go all the way from a rejected (because controversial) documentary like Kenneth Griffith's *Hang Out Your Brightest Colours* to some new way of making children's television programmes in some unfavoured regional company. He would also turn to the many institutions which are already making, or wish to make, their own television programmes. This inevitably gets parodied as an opportunity for some British version of H. L. Hunt to turn an endless well-funded capitalist agitprop. But the point of having a statutory authority, which the OBA is (a point Annan rather undersold), is to see that the sponsors are linked to *creative* endeavour across the spectrum.

But while there are sporting and industrial sponsored programmes that would pay their own way, and a variety of creative outlets that could well seek a link with the OBA for a wider showing of their products – the Arts Council, the National Film School, the Consumers' Association – many others would be directly funded. These include educational programmes, Open University or Open College, which come from programme outlets which will soon be reaching for autonomy in everything except finance (and less willing to tolerate the rescheduling and reshooting which the BBC is currently demanding of OU drama, for example). They also include the deliberations of Parliament, of Assemblies, of trades union and industrial conferences. This usually raises a guffaw. But Parliament would be willing to acquiesce in, and pay for, the televising of its proceedings at greater length on the OBA if it saw this as a corrective to the snippety approach of the other channels. Not since the early days of BBC-2 has it been possible to take a major event like the recent Energy Conference and treat it at length. BBC-2 is not now that sort of Channel. The Open Channel should be capable of clearing its schedules for such a purpose, paid for by the originating institution, if we have the courage of our democratic convictions.

I have left till last the case which has been most widely argued and most widely accepted – the time for independent productions, for community access programmes and for minority cultures and activities. To invite independent productions is not to casualise the broadcasting profession, but rather to recognise that some groups and individuals produce their best work, are truest to themselves, when not under the aegis of large organisations. At the moment such people are shut out, or come in only on an agreed package deal for a particular company. They cannot raise the finance to do it their way because everyone knows they would not get the airtime. It is that assumption which has to be reversed.

So what are we left with? On the one side is the naked self-interest of the companies anxious to snuff out any threat and make the world safe for their half of the duopolistic ideal. On the other was the Annan Committee, wishing to provide a creative *lebensraum* for talent within commercial television but seeing any IBA-dominated schedulings as certain to bring about ITV-2 by the back door. I know Annan

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reported at a bad time. We drafted in the depths of national pessimism about the British economy, and we felt it right to be cautious about when the fourth channel could be afforded. We reported to a government which has lost its parliamentary majority, which is seeking an emollient passage through its next year, and will not add to its problems with clashes over inessentials. We relied on our report being covered by media which have a vested interest in belittling those parts of it which may threaten their own divine right to expand. Difference approaches do mean different structures, and that is painful. It is also easy to misrepresent when suspicion of free-loading bureaucracies is deep in the national conscience. But Labour supporters and trade unionists ought to cherish the possibility that has now opened up of extending diversity, instead of mocking it with a gift-wrapped extension of our presently dominant cultural and social assumptions. The OBA would not be as popular as an ITV-2 in JICTAR terms. But it could be a People's Channel, just the same.

Corinna Adam

Nation Unto Nation?

If the old Reithian verities of broadcasting are enshrined anywhere, it is in the great grey semi-circular building at the foot of Kingsway, from which the BBC presents its picture of the world, to the world. If there are any corridors still stalked by the GOM, they must be among the complexities of Bush House. Or perhaps not; perhaps it is the one place he does not need to haunt. His principles are safe enough. Far from the agonised indecisions of Portland Place and Lime Grove, Bush House still knows what it stands for. However worried they may be by the slam-bang cuts recommended by the think tank report, they are ready for battle. As a body, they have been fighting off, compromising with, ignoring and soothing government officials since before some of the think tank's members started school.

Perhaps this makes the institution seem intolerably fuddy-duddy; I hope to modify that picture. But it is not entirely untrue; and not necessarily wrong. The attack on Bush House, and its values, had to come. Curiously, it has come at an opportune time – when it has become newly acceptable, and not just among middle-aged readers of the *Daily Telegraph*, to say that trendiness is not all, and where did it get us anyway? Bush House is no MRA of the air-waves, but it has its principles, and its twin gods – the British interest, and impartiality. People who work there tend to become faintly irritated with sixth-form certainties that the two are irreconcilable, and probably non-existent anyway. It is their life; it is what they argue about the whole time; an outsider can be made to feel occasionally that he is poking his nose in on a private discussion, full of mysterious references, about the Whig theory of history or the Apostolic Succession. Nevertheless, the discussions go on – into the small hours, since of necessity many people in Bush are night-shift workers – in a different tone from the ones up the road at Broadcasting House, or out West at the TV Centre. In a word, they seem less shrill.

This is not because Bush has a particularly high quota of veteran radio men working for it. The instant impression, once through the portals (there's really no other word for them [illegible]

Friendship of English-Speaking Peoples', and obscured by a fine tree, is of a quiet Tower of Babel, if that's possible: in particular, of a great number of very non-British-looking brown and black faces, talking at great speed in unrecognisable languages, smiling and arguing over the filthy coffee in the canteen. In a place which has been a refuge for political dissidents for 40 years, the atmosphere – for all the slogan's well-meaning, patronising tone – is necessarily cosmopolitan.

At its worst, it is charity administered by the Foreign Office – and it is here that the think tank seem to want to cut back. In government terms, the financial savings are peanuts. By cutting programme hours in all by 40 per cent (which means, among other things, a total eight-hour closedown every 24 hours) the Foreign Office would probably save some £2.7m. a [illegible]. (It might be an idea if someone compared this with the amount spent on educating diplomats' children at public schools.) The report seems to see Bush House as elitist, as having a dottily old-fashioned view of Britain's importance in the world: not just a luxury but a positive impediment to their kind of progress. They regard it as an anachronism, the *Dad's Army* of the media.

Indeed, in some ways, they are right. The international bulletin is still called, with fine Forties' determination, *London Calling*. Less than reverent young producers, both at Bush and in other sections of the BBC, say irritably, 'Who *cares* about the war, anyway, for God's sake?' And, of course, it was then that Bush's values were formed, when the people who broadcast to resistance movements were the elite corps, when the legendary BBC reputation for 'impartiality', for accuracy, was formed.

Since then, the ingredients of impartiality have become more changeable, according to the cook. If Lord Reith survives in Bush House, so does his consort, 'Auntie'. There is a tendency to read, for 'impartial', 'inoffensive'. It is a hard game, and played on a variety of courts. Was it right, for example, to sack the Portuguese journalists who had been rebuked for making 'Marxist' propaganda in 1975, but continued to put out the same sort of news bulletins?

some of the BBC's inside knowledge of what was happening in Uganda – indeed not to broadcast it at all – for the sake of the British subjects and Ugandan dissidents who might suffer? Is it right, as the think tank assumes, that now Portugal and Spain are just about acceptable democracies once more, that it is unnecessary – nay, patronising and wasteful – to broadcast to them? And just exactly how much influence does the FO have over Bush House anyway? It seems to vary. I was once withdrawn from a regular stint broadcasting to West Africa when a faceless man turned up on the day I was doing a programme about human artificial insemination. Perhaps my stint was due to come to an end anyway. But if I can still remember that occasion, no wonder conspiracy theories continue to multiply among the people who work there full-time.

There are certainly enough conspiracy theories formed around the 'Bushmen': bound to be. Hugh Greene instituted this cricket club during the second world war partly, one member said, 'to give people something to do between the air raids'; partly, from another member, 'to teach all the foreign chaps a bit about England'. During its lifetime, the club has been construed variously as a mafia or just a fairish club: its members come from all over the BBC and a little bit outside, they have dinners (all-male) and you get in by a simple request 'Dear Fred, Would you happen to be free to play on Sunday the . . .' after you have been sussed out. It is, I think, the kind of institution which – if you are in the BBC, not asked to join, and then offered another £10,000-odd a year from ITV – makes you keen to leave.

To be a Bushman, it has always been best to play the white man's game – not least cricket, which has got several people to the top. So, too, has the organisation itself – Directors-General, like Jacobs, Greene, and Curran, have proceeded upwards from there: and there are quite a few people who might have preferred the current Bush House director, Gerard Mansell, to have got the top job this time around. Mansell is blue-eyed, philosophical, defensive of his men. And of his service. 'Lisbon, yes: the think tank may not worry about what they think of us out there, but we *know* how important we are, and how much we shall continue to rate.' At home, there is no little amusement at the way in which the smart, indeed sensible, idea nowadays is to tune in to World Service News, rather than to BBC-4. They may talk in crisp, broken syllables suited to crackling waves, but they talk about interesting things.

Bush has, if nothing else, expertise. It trains up young broadcasters and passes them on. It knows the wavelengths, the heads of government, the men in exile. It has been there for a long time, and believes in wisdom. It provides an incomparable service – incomparable in every sense, since there is so little feed-back. Small countries survive by concentrating on what they are best at: cameras, motor-cars, silk or oil. We are probably still best at broadcasting, just. The trouble is, it is

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Jeremy Isaacs*

Letters To Viewers

Dear Mr Johnson,

I have your letter in which you protest about the language and morals of the characters in our series *Punk People*, and ask instead for more old films. I am sorry, first of all, that you so dislike the series. *Punk People* is thought by some to paint an accurate picture of life in Britain, at least as some young people live it, and it has already been nominated for the Scandinavian Prize.

As to feature films, I promise you we show as many as we are allowed to, seven a week including afternoons and late nights. I rather agree with you about the entertainment value of Hollywood at its best. But they don't make them like that any more.

Again, thank you for writing. We are always glad to hear from interested viewers.

Yours, etc.

Dear Mrs Gold,

Thank you for your letter complaining of bias in the last of our series of programmes on the Middle East. While I take very seriously the points you make, and will certainly ask the production team to take note of your comments, I wonder whether you saw the second half of Tuesday's programme, or indeed any other of the programmes in the series? Had you done so, I do not believe you could argue that we gave only one side of the story. I am grateful to you, nevertheless, for taking the trouble to write to us.

Yours, etc.

Dear Mr Blackley,

I thank you for your most interesting letter about Wednesday's episode of *Flying Squad*. You complain that in it, and in the series as a whole, we 'wallow in violence for its own sake'. The charge is one I categorically reject.

It is true, of course, that there are violent scenes in *Flying Squad*, the arrest of Jingo Jones and partner in this particular episode was certainly one, but each occurs naturally in the course of the action, or arises from the betrayal of the characters involved. There is no question of our gratuitously adding in violence. Indeed some viewers criticise us for not doing so. A lady complained to me recently that the sound effects in fight scenes were poor. She wanted to hear 'the bones crunch'.

Policemen seem to enjoy the series. Their main criticism is not that it makes police work seem too tough, but too easy.

Thank you again for writing.

Yours, etc.

Dear Mr Kellet,

Thank you for your letter complaining that *Punk People* last week gave an unfair picture of homosexuals. My colleagues and I have read it with interest.

You complain that in the middle of the episode, after the scene in the recording studio, three couples, two heterosexual and one homosexual, were seen pairing off, and that later the next morning, although two girls talked of the previous night, the homosexual couple were not seen again. You ask whether it was an embarrassed reticence on our part that precluded mention of explicit sexual activity between them, or whether this was a deliberate omission intended as a slight to the gay community.

Neither. The author of *Punk People* is free to construct his plays and to tell the story as he chooses, within the constraints of the medium. If he had thought it necessary to write the scene you felt was lacking, I am sure he would have done so. Perhaps, on another occasion, you will be happier with what he writes. I shall certainly let him see your letter. And, of course, we will continue to keep your general point in mind.

Yours, etc.

Dear William,

No. I am sorry I cannot bring *Bionic Hound* forward to before your bedtime. If your dad will not let you see it all, I think you should go to bed before it begins.

By the way, do you ever watch television in the late afternoon? There are some interesting programmes on then meant for children older than you.

Sorry not to be more helpful. Congratulations on your spelling.

Yours, etc.

Dear Mr Jenkinson,

I am a little taken aback by your criticisms of our programme on baby battering. It is true that we gave grim details of several cases, and that our 'expert' spoke dispassionately of the extent of the problem. Nevertheless, I do not believe 'due impartiality', as you suggest, obliged us also to include a spokesman for baby battering to 'balance' the rest of the material in the programme. Baby battering is not, so far as I know, a matter of 'current political or industrial controversy' under the terms of the Television Act.

I note that you intend to report the programme and this company to the IBA. Nevertheless, although I appreciate your writing to us, I stand by the programme.

Yours, etc.

Dear Joe,

Just a line, at the end of a long day, in response to yours. It is good to hear from you again, even though it is the familiar newspaper ruckus about censorship and a clash between a programme company and the IBA that prompted you to write. Why still so? you ask. Basically it is because nothing has changed in the way ITV is governed since your day. The Act gives the Authority ultimate responsibility for what is broadcast, which Annan has recently reaffirmed, and the people there want to make absolutely certain nothing we say risks offence under the Television Act, or the legislation affecting Northern Ireland, before they let it go. It is an odd way to have to utter, but we get by.

Trouble is, we spend so much time nowadays being polite to people I sometimes wonder whether anything worthwhile ever gets said. You remember Roy Campbell:

> You praise the firm restraint with which
> they write –
> I'm with you there, of course:
> They use the snaffle and the curb all right.
> But where's the bloody horse?

Yours ever

Jeremy Isaacs is Director of Programmes, Thames Television

Roger Woddis

Misguided

The Times, 30 August, describes the National Front as 'a movement of misguided individuals', rather than 'the creation of evil men'.

Those who through pulpit, screen or pen
Give warning of tomorrow's crimes
And dare to speak of evil men
Are sadly far behind *The Times*.

The Front has certain attributes
Which makes a decent fellow wince
But, notwithstanding new recruits,
Deserve to reach the public prints.

No ogre from the Brothers Grimm,
Of what can Tyndall we accused?
The worst that can be said of him
Is that he's terribly confused.

And though we spurn his master plan,
With every immigrant expelled,
It goes against the grain to ban
Opinions so sincerely held.

Misguided? Yes. A menace? No.
At most a muddle-headed threat
That lacks a Krupp to make it grow.
At least, it hasn't happened yet.

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Profile: Sir Charles Curran

The Consolidator

Sir Charles Curran retires as Director-General of the BBC at the end of this month. At the age of 55 he is not going willingly but he will be leaving a good deal more cheerfully than either he or his friends expected six months ago. Ever since he became D-G on April Fool's Day 1969 – a date chosen by his predecessor – Charles Curran has had to live under the shadow of Hugh Greene. Not that Curran disapproved of Greene – indeed exactly the reverse. It was precisely because he stood (and stands) rather in awe of Greene that Curran's basic worry all along has been lest he should turn out to be the man held responsible for dismantling Greene's achievement. That worry was largely laid to rest with the publication of the (in content if not in style) surprisingly pro-BBC Annan Report on Broadcasting last spring. And if Curran is now preparing to leave Broadcasting House for the managing directorship of Visnews in a relatively relaxed mood, it is primarily because, under him, the BBC survived what was potentially the most dangerous attack made upon it in its entire history.

Curran claims to have seen the attack coming. He may have stood solidly with Greene in the liberating Sixties (he contributed, in fact, to some of his more famous speeches) but he remains capable of saying the three things *he* suffered most from becoming D-G were 'Hugh Greene, Charles Hill and lack of money – in that order'. If it is in a way an uncharacteristic remark – for Curran is basically a kindly man – it remains useful as a measure, as it were, of Curran's apprehension as to what *easily might have happened* had he not insisted on pulling in the bridle a little.

It was not Greene's objectives that alarmed Curran: it was his manner of reaching them. Was it really wise to make a habit of insulting Mrs Whitehouse on every conceivable occasion? Was it prudent to have alienated Harold Wilson's affections so decisively that after the 1966 election, as the conquering Prime Minister, he would not even grant the BBC an interview? And, perhaps above all, could the BBC itself survive if it got so far ahead of public opinion that it began arrogantly asserting the rule of the enlightened? If they sound rather Clapham omnibus questions, then the answer is that Charles Curran is a bit of a Clapham omnibus man.

He comes, in fact, from what the old BBC would have called 'a humble background'. His father was an army schoolmaster, in the days long before you could (like George Wigg) become a colonel by joining the Royal Army Education Corps: in the old Army Corps of Schoolmasters you became a warrant officer on appointment, and that was that. By the time, however, Curran was growing up, his father had left the army and had become a teacher at an elementary school – at a place called Wath-on-Dearne in the South Yorkshire coal-mining triangle. It was there that Curran was educated, first at the elementary school (forcing his father to leave and go to another up the valley) and then at the local grammar school, which even in the bleak 1930s used to win the occasional scholarship to Oxford or Cambridge. Curran ('I came top in everything – I must have been insufferable') predictably collared one of them and went up to Magdalene College, Cambridge for a year before being called up.

After a quiet war, spent mainly in India, Curran returned to Cambridge where he took a double first and gradually widened his own horizons: his friendship, for example, with Sir John Hunt, the present secretary to the cabinet, dates from this Cambridge period. But his own aspirations still seem to have remained modest. After Cambridge he tried to enter not the then grand diplomatic corps but the far humbler consular service – only to be turned down even for that at one of the then fashionable 'country house party' selection weekends. Humiliated, he was on the point of joining a trade magazine called *Export/Import International* when Harman Grisewood (whose father he had met in Cyprus coming back from the war) mentioned that there might be a job going as a home talks producer in the BBC. Within a fortnight Curran had got it and was soon cheerfully knocking talks into shape for delivery after the nine o'clock BBC Home Service news.

Having spent three years at this, Curran took the one uncharacteristic step of his career: just married to a Bush House studio manager, he upped and left to go (for more money) to be assistant editor of the trawlermen's trade paper, *Fishing News*. More than a quarter of a century later he still somehow seems embarrassed by this episode, hinting that his decision to leave had something to do with the way BBC scripts were in those days subjected to 'interference from above'. Within a year anyway he was back at the BBC – though now in the much less glamorous role of a member of the monitoring service at Caversham. He himself says today that the experience of working in a private

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enterprise newspaper office taught him how much he 'missed the public sector': others might put the same point slightly differently – that it needed a year away to make him realise how much he was at heart and by instinct one of nature's bureaucrats.

Certainly that was what the rest of his BBC career demonstrated. By 1953 he had become an 'administrative trainee', soon he was a 'senior administrative assistant'; by the end of the 1950s he had been out to Canada as the BBC's 'Representative' and in 1963 – without having been directly involved in programme-making since 1950 – was already on his way to the top as secretary to the Board of Governors. In 1967 he succeeded Hugh Greene as Director of External Broadcasting and two years after that (with Greene's strong support) succeeded him once again as Director-General.

Even at the time it did not look exactly an adventurous appointment – indeed, Lord Hill, already by then the BBC's new 'strongman' chairman, has since revealed that he and the Board of Governors flirted with other names largely because they thought Curran a bit 'colourless'. He was in effect the backroom boy being promoted to the front-office – a setting certainly not made any easier for him since, in addition to the ample person of Lord Hill himself, it was already noisily and boisterously filled by the man who at that time was 'Mr BBC' to the public, Huw Wheldon. To make matters worse, Wheldon had, in fact, been the runner-up for Curran's own job.

Yet what kind of figure does the BBC really need as a Director-General? The minority on the Annan Committee describe the post as combining the roles of 'editor-in-chief and resident theologian, pope and emperor in one' – which perhaps in itself is an argument for filling it with a quiet rather than a flamboyant personality. And certainly, if Charles Curran has failed to be a famous D-G, he has not been a feeble one.

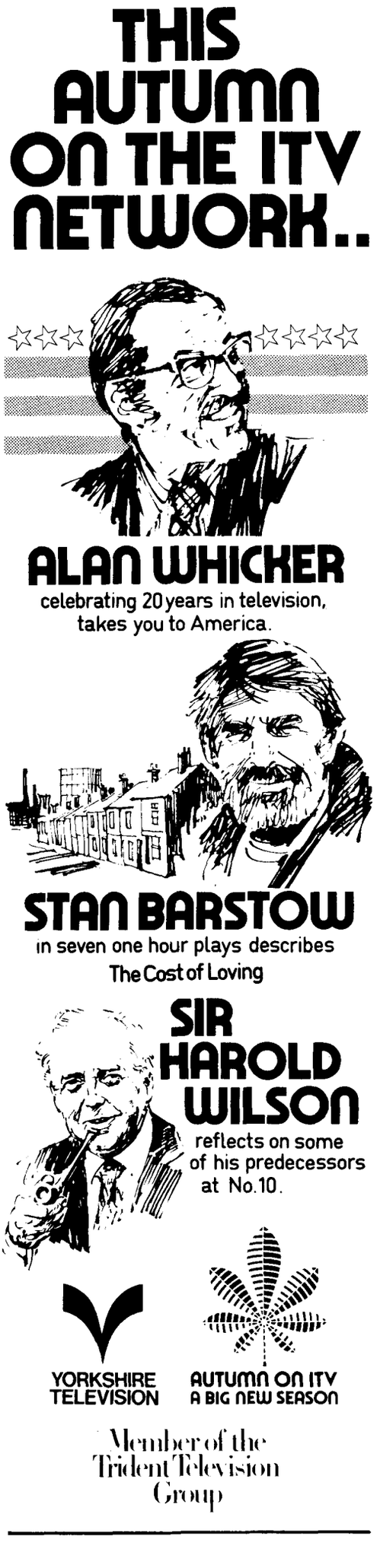
'Are you going to be Lord Hill's poodle?' he was asked on the *World at One* on the day his appointment was announced – and probably that was the first doubt he needed to resolve. His start, admittedly, was not exactly propitious: though he navigated skilfully enough through the 'Broadcasting in the Seventies' squall of 1969, he very nearly wrecked the whole BBC battleship in the fierce storm with the Labour Party over *Yesterday's Men* two years later. Whether the fault was Curran's or Hill's, the fact that the chairman and the Board of Governors (or at least some members of it) had 'vetted' the programme before transmission meant that the Corporation had been put in the impossible public position of being seen to act as 'judge and defendant' in its own cause. The inevitable consequence was the establishment within six months of an outside Complaints Commission – a constitutional innovation strongly opposed by Hugh Greene and initially resisted by Curran himself. Even today Curran looks back on the *Yesterday's Men* affair with a shudder – freely admitting that it stands out as 'the worst moment' of his eight and a half years as D-G.

Nevertheless the Corporation was probably lucky to get away with it at the price that it did; the real threat at the time was the installation of a Critchley/Whitehouse type of Broadcasting Council – and at least the swift creation of a Complaints Commission blocked that. Why, though, did Curran behave so maladroitly over the entire episode – even at one stage allowing himself to be put on the mat before the governors by Lord Hill? Some of his own friends suggest that it is probably best seen as an indication of the extent to which he did not understand – and even was intimidated by – television.

The row over 'Broadcasting in the Seventies' and the future of the Third Programme he could handle, since it concerned things that he knew about; the confrontation with the Labour Party over *Yesterday's Men* plunged him right into the middle of an area of which he knew nothing. He had never, after all, worked in television and the ethics of film-editing, cross-cutting and music-backing were a closed book to him. At least, however, Curran – though scarred – learned from the experience. Three years later, when the BBC came under a similar Labour Party attack over an interview given by T. Dan Smith on the *Tonight* programme, Charles Curran succeeded in dispatching the main complainant, Ted Short (now Lord Glenamara), with effortless ease; and he did the same earlier this year over the Keith Kyle interviews with Northern Ireland police suspects, on this occasion even making an effective intervention on the TV nine o'clock news bulletin. Evidently, even a Director-General can benefit from on-the-job training.

Of course things also became much easier for Curran once he had got Lord Hill off his back, which he had by the end of 1972. His relationship with the present BBC chairman, Sir Michael Swann, proved a great deal less of a strain – not least because Swann, like Curran, is by temperament essentially a private man. True, the constitutional balance between the chairman and the governors on the one side and the D-G and the management on the other is not what it was – a fact that Curran himself virtually seemed to concede in his recent Granada Guildhall lecture when he somewhat pointedly reminded the Board of Governors that, though during his tenure of the Director-Generalship they might have enjoyed 'a minor resurrection', they 'should remember that Christ himself performed no miracles after his own Resurrection'. Nor were those mocking words: from a life-long Roman Catholic – and one who still goes to church near his home in Mrs Thatcher's Finchley every Sunday – they were intended to be taken seriously.

The fact is that with Charles Curran, as with many other people, appearances can be deceptive. Bureaucrat or not, he is a man of deep convictions and some courage. He hands over a BBC to his successor undismembered and virtually indistinguishable in independence and integrity from the one he inherited from Hugh Greene just over eight years ago – and that, given the threats that had built up, is no small achievement. It is certainly something in which Curran himself takes a not immodest pride, a pride perhaps best revealed by his obvious anxiety now about the new regime and management structure which, in turn, will be inheriting from him at the end of the month.


THIS AUTUMN ON THE ITV NETWORK..
ALAN WHICKER
celebrating 20 years in television, takes you to America.
STAN BARSTOW
in seven one hour plays describes
The Cost of Loving
SIR HAROLD WILSON
reflects on some of his predecessors at No.10.
YORKSHIRE TELEVISION
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London Diary

☐ This week's issue contains six articles touching in one way or another on broadcasting – and no doubt to model railway enthusiasts and anti-vivisectionists it will seem far too many. But I have, I'm afraid, no apologies to make. Go into any pub – or indeed any office – and what do people talk about? What they've seen on the telly. The goggle-box has become the great common bond of human experience. Yet what passive consumers we are. It's five months now since Lord Annan produced his report on broadcasting – and though the interest groups have mobilised and engaged each other no one, I think, could claim that it has produced anything like a genuine public debate. Very shortly Merlyn Rees is due to deliver the Government's considered views on the future structure of broadcasting in Britain. I don't envy him his task. Whatever he recommends, it's bound to look like an imposed solution from above – and that, for once, won't be the Government's fault. In fact the present Government seems to me to have tried rather harder than its predecessors to get the general public involved at least in discussing decisions that need to be made. But a fat lot of luck it's had. The 'consultative documents', the green papers and all the rest pour out of the Stationery Office mainly to gather dust on journalists' shelves. Broadcasting, one might have hoped, would have been the exception – but 'the period of debate' allowed for after the publication of the Annan Report has so far produced no other sound but a gentle lapping of apathy.

☐ In some ways, of course, the various grand commissions and committees that the Government establishes positively seem to invite that kind of treatment. Professor Oliver McGregor, the former chairman of the Royal Commission on the Press, kindly sent me this week two companion volumes to his Royal Commission report which itself was published to a resounding plop of public indifference last July. One is a comparatively slim volume with the by-line of a sociologist attached to it entitled *The Women's Periodical Press in Britain 1946-1976*: at first glance it looks a reasonable read, mercifully free of graphs and tables. But the other – an altogether fatter and more amorphous work – headed *Attitudes to the Press* can, I charitably assume, only have been published with a view to giving sociology a bad name. It contains no less than 326 different tables – from none of which I managed to gather a single piece of information that seemed to me either relevant or important. In fact, the only thing that has stuck in my mind is its invention of the new concept of 'a senior journalist'. He or she, you may be as intrigued as I was to learn, is 'a journalist who had either passed the proficiency test or was aged 25 or over'. Can you think of anyone in ordinary speech referring to a doctor who had just passed his exams and his 25th birthday as 'a senior doctor' or a clergyman with the general ordination exam and his 25th birthday behind him as 'a senior clergyman'? Not surprisingly – in fact rather gratifyingly – only 43 per cent of the 'senior journalists' whom the Commission's research team tried to contact even bothered to reply. And yet this is the kind of sociologists' claptrap on which – according to a note at the beginning of Professor McGregor's final report – the Commission spent nearly £250,000.

☐ Some committee reports do, however, have a kind of posthumous relevance – even if nothing happens to their recommendations. The case of Yolande McShane prompted me to look up this week what the Younger Committee on Privacy had had to say in 1972 about 'unlawful surveillance'. In paragraph 563, it laid down that its proposed new criminal offence of 'surreptitious surveillance' would incorporate the following elements:

(a) a technical device;
(b) surreptitious use of the device;
(c) a person who is, or his possessions which are, the object of surveillance;
(d) a set of circumstances in which, were it not for the use of the device, that person would be justified in believing that he had protected himself or his possessions from surveillance whether by overhearing or observation;
(e) an intention by the user to render those circumstances ineffective as protection against overhearing or observation;
(f) absence of consent by the victim.

Too much, I suppose, to hope that the chief constable of Sussex will now feel a duty to explain which of those elements he thinks was lacking in his 'bugging' of Mrs McShane. Or, indeed, that the Government will now feel forced to do something about remedying what five years ago the Younger Committee recognised as a serious gap in the law.

☐ One person who deserves a pat-on-the-back this week is W. D. Flacks, the BBC's Northern Ireland political correspondent. Ten days ago he led the BBC's nine o'clock news with the prediction that President Carter was shortly to make a major statement on Northern Ireland – only to find his prediction met with a blanket denial from the White House press spokesman. True, the denial was later modified to a grudging acceptance that there *might* have been some talks at State Department level – but even then, it was insisted, that the President himself had known absolutely nothing about them till Thursday morning. Yet a mere five days later President Carter does exactly what Flacks said he was going to do all along. If I were the luckless White House press secretary I think I'd be inclined to ask (in Lord Beaverbrook's famous phrase) 'who's in charge of the clattering train?', and possibly to wonder ruefully if it wasn't W. D. Flacks.

☐ One of the highlights of veteran film director Henry King's visit to London came when he attended an informal press luncheon at the National Film Theatre last Tuesday. He was reunited with the silent star, Bessie Love, whom he had not seen for 58 years. The encounter was memorable since both have wonderfully detailed recall and endless anecdotes, as well as seemingly boundless energy. Asked if Henry King remained in close contact with contemporaries, Mrs King regretted that this was not the case. Many of them were showing signs of the passing years, while Henry, still flying his plane and playing golf at 81, just wore them out! Henry King felt it was just matter of enjoying his hobbies: 'After all, I was lucky enough to indulge in my favourite hobby for years. I was never in it for the money, but they just kept on paying me anyhow.' As the luncheon closed, there were some red faces among British Film Institute personnel as it was discovered that one of the guests had walked off with Henry King's newly-acquired Homburg hat. Still, he took it very well – especially after someone tactfully explained that it proved that hunting is not confined to Elvis Presley, but that it extends to surviving octogenarians as well.

☐ At the risk of seeming to turn this whole Diary into a promotion 'spot' I suppose I had better end it where I began – with television. Next Monday night (5 September) at 7.40 p.m. on BBC-2 the NEW STATESMAN itself will be on view – as the third in Harold Evans's present series of programmes *Other Voices*. It is not, I hasten to explain, in any sense a 'house' film – indeed no one in this office has seen it. I did, however, see the first film in the series on *Rolling Stone* – and confidently expect on Monday night to be found muttering to myself 'You know something? I don't like the look of that fellow.'

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ News that Lord George Wigg, former Postmaster-General, has followed the Duke of Edinburgh as one of Crayford Stadium's distinguished greyhound owners, sparks memories of the connection between Crayford and Crippen. – *Erith and Crayford Observer* (Steve Haywood)

☐ Mr John Reilly, for the defence, said Mr Woolnough was a drug addict. His mother worked in the office of the Prime Minister of Rhodesia 'and is obviously a respectable person'. – *The Times* (R. Oxlade)

☐ Taste is a structural feature in a complex metaphorical system, and it is unlikely to be any easier to change it than any other global feature of our national life. – *Listener* (Alan Young)

☐ The Rural Dean of Southampton (the Rev. Peter Rayban) has supported a call by one of the city's Labour MPs (Mr Richard Mitchell) for legalised prostitution. Mr Rayban, who is also Vicar of Maybush, sees this as one of the ways of protecting young girls from being lured into the world of vice. – *Portsmouth News* (R. E. Ryan)

☐ We are amazed by the number of people turning up on demos wearing sandals or flip-flops. It is likely they will, even just walking along in a demo, get their feet stood on, not to mention the damage likely to be inflicted should they be involved in a crowd of people shoved around by the police, as at Grunwicks. – Letter in *Socialist Worker* (Tony Jeffs)

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Mervyn Jones

People's Democratic Polo

Polo may not have much in common with chess, but both come from Persia. Stone goal-posts, said to be 2,000 years old, have been identified at Isfahan. The game was taken by the Moguls to India, where it was enthusiastically adopted by British sahibs. In 1870 the first ground in this country was laid out at Hurlingham, near the far end of the King's Road. It must have been practically in the country at that time, but in 1946 it was compulsorily purchased by the London County Council. The confiscation still rankles, it's regarded as sacred territory, and the governing body of the sport is called the Hurlingham Polo Association.

A council member of the HPA is Mr Douglas Riley-Smith of Loxwood, Sussex. His domain, called Brewhurst, is approached by a private road and consists of two rambling mansions, several more modest houses for employees, a farm and an almost unbelievably picturesque old water-mill. Ushering me into his study and firmly excluding his five dogs, Mr Riley-Smith tells me about polo. He's much concerned to disabuse me of the idea that it's a game for the privileged. The 530 players listed by the HPA, he says, 'come from every walk of life – anything from a duke to a garage hand'. Mrs Riley-Smith goes so far as to assert: 'It's the most democratic game there is.'

Later, at Brockenhurst in the New Forest, I obtain a fuller picture from another council member, Colonel D. L. Sylvester-Bradley. It depends, apparently, on what kind of polo you're talking about. All players carry handicaps, from 0 to ten, based on their record. A team has four players and the handicaps are added up; thus, the team's ranking could be anything from 0 to (theoretically) 40. High-goal teams play only against other high-goal teams, and likewise for medium-goal and low-goal teams. Polo in the upper bracket is very expensive indeed. A team that sets out to win the Cowdray Gold Cup would be spending about £30,000, the Colonel reckons. One quality pony, bred in Argentina, can cost £3,000. That's where the best ponies come from; rounding up cattle, with all the wheeling and turning and emergency stops, is pretty much like playing polo. It is in Argentina, more than anywhere else, that polo has become a national game – though a British team which toured there last year was only narrowly defeated.

The democrats of polo belong to the Rhinefield Club, of which Colonel Sylvester-Bradley is chairman. The founder, Major Walker-Monro of Rhinefield Lodge, laid down in 1935 that no pony appearing on its ground should be valued at over £50. Of course, pounds were pounds in those days, and indeed the whole idea of a money limit has been scrapped, but Rhinefield still stands for cheap polo. The team manager, Major P. D. Bruxner-Randall, tells me: 'I've played here on a nag you wouldn't look at twice. Fact is, I made it myself.' Seeing my amazement at this Pygmalion-like feat, he explains that 'made' is the polo term for 'trained'. The nag in question cost a mere £280. Moreover, matches at the Cowdray level consist of six chukkas (seven-minute periods) and a player mounts a completely fresh pony for each chukka, so he has to turn up with six. Rhinefield games have four chukkas and players merely rest their ponies, thus needing only two.

Polo is the fastest of all games, with the possible exception of ice-hockey, and not without its risks. As the Colonel puts it with a chuckle: 'You meet the ground now and again.' Play is halted when a pony falls over, but not when a rider falls off. Arms, legs and collar-bones (human) are broken from time to time, but the Colonel argues convincingly that the season's toll is less than that of a rugger club. The rules of polo, he points out, are mostly safety regulations. For instance, you must approach an opponent 'right shoulder to right shoulder'. Left-handed people aren't allowed to play, which is logical when you think of it. Women, by the way, play in the same team as men.

Here on the Rhinefield ground, pleasantly framed by the great oaks and beeches of the New Forest, we're to see a match between Toulston, a Yorkshire team, and the Ramblers. Delayed by torrential rain, play starts an hour late. I have time to meet the three gentlemen seated on the raised platform at the edge of the ground. I should have brought John Coleman with me; marvellously, all three seem to be impersonated by figures from the classic age of British films. On the right is the scorer, Sir Charles Duke, wearing a green Tyrolean hat and played by Charles Laughton. In the middle is the referee, Mr E. A. V. de Candole, smoking a curved Peterson pipe and played by Basil Rathbone. And on the left the timekeeper, Brigadier Mainprise-King, who has the task of ringing a massive bell at the end of each chukka and is played by C. Aubrey Smith.

When play begins, it dawns on me that polo is not an easy game to watch. Players change ends every time a goal is scored – though not after a chukka. Since there may be two goals within a minute, you have to keep on the alert to remember who's heading which way. As in ice-hockey, the action moves with dizzying speed from one end of the field to the other. And the field is 300 yards long, so you seldom get a close-up view of what's happening. You get some help from a running commentary, delivered through amplifiers in a patrician and authoritative tone. But the commentator has problems of vision too, and some of his statements turn out to be inoperative.

At one point, I'm startled by a resounding crack. 'Good hit, b[illegible]

peded by a pony's leg,' the commentator explains. All eight players crowd together, one of them shouts irritably 'Get out of the way, Rodney', and the commentator remarks: 'Bit of a mêlée, I'm afraid.' Meanwhile Toulston gain the advantage: they're leading by 3-0 at the end of the second chukka.

It's half time. An announcement invites the spectators to 'tread in the ground'. Anxious to help, I'm soon trying to replace muddy divots and smooth out deep hoof-marks. I get into conversation with Mrs Bruxner-Randall, doing a more effective job with her sturdy boots. She is mourning a favourite pony, who was still playing at the age of 20. (I'm sure you know that a pony doesn't mean a young horse – that's a foal.) 'He'd have been good for a few more years,' she says, 'if he hadn't been done in by peritonitis. The vet cut him open to look at his heart. Largest heart he'd even seen.'

The third chukka opens frustratingly when Roger Pike of the Ramblers loses his stick, and is also marked by an unusual number of fouls. These infractions are listed in the rules in descending order: 'dangerous foul', 'less dangerous foul', 'moderate foul' and 'mild foul'. After what must be a dangerous foul, Toulston are awarded a free hit from a position 30 yards from the goal. The ball wings through the air . . . the commentator, unable to exclude a scornful note from his voice, tells us: 'It's gone wide.' But that's not how it looks to the umpires and Toulston has scored again. This fourth goal doesn't appear on the scoreboard, placed 300 yards away behind the other goal-posts. Having revised his own version of events, the commentator barks crossly: 'Scoreboard's wrong, by the way.' Just before the bell rings, Toulston put the score up to 5-0.

In the fourth chukka, the Ramblers score at last. 'I'd better not call this the final chukka,' the commentator remarks. It's a convention that no polo game is ever drawn. If the scores are level, extra chukkas are played; and in the unlikely event of there being no score at all, the space between the goal-posts is widened from the normal eight yards to 16. The pace has now become hotter than ever and the commentator is hard put to it to keep up. Luckily for him, it happens that none of the players have double-barrelled names. I'm wondering how he'll manage in the next event, when Taunton Vale's team includes C. A. G. Gore-Langton and M. J. T. Harrison-Sleap.

But attention: the Toulston men are speeding toward an undefended goal. Chris Tauchert takes a mighty swipe from a distance of maybe 40 yards. I'm a long way from this goal, so I'm dependent on the commentator. I hear: 'Good shot if it did go through the goal. Did it? What? Oh, really. Wonderful shot.' The players change ends. With a minute to go before the final bell, Toulston score again. Toulston score again? I've reached the point of hesitating to believe my own eyes.

Round the goals, the field is more mud than grass. White breeches are sadly mucky. Dark clouds threaten another Bank Holiday downpour. But Toulston have won by 7-1.

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Here and There

In view of the average age of the happy residents in our beautiful and contented little corner of Devon it is, I suppose, only to be expected, but all the same it grieves me to report that in the last 18 months, and after being relatively unmolested for a number of years, the Grim Reaper has been rather too vigorously at work among us. When sorrows come, they come not as single spies, as we know, but in battalions. Well, it seems like a battalion to us. At least ten of the best have gone (our agreeable Rector, speaking from the heart and without notes at the services, always strikes brilliantly the right tone. We gulp, and walk out into the sunshine feeling somehow comforted). This being so, and never knowing when one is going oneself to draw the short straw, I always try to wear on the face a complacently composed, relaxed and pleased expression. One may be struck down at any moment and it would never do to be caught napping and pass into the Great Unknown looking unattractively sour and grumpy and finding no welcome on the mat ('Go away!').

A pleased expression is, mind you, not always too easy to achieve in our agitating and hugger-mugger world where so little seems to be as it should be. I am not, for once, complaining on this occasion either of the permanent horrors of the Post Office (the Sunday post has clearly gone for good but will *nobody* in authority fight for our vanishing telegrams?) or of Mr Healey (that buoyant mood and confident smile have been tremendously *en évidence* in the past week or so: hold on to your hats), but I do find myself increasingly critical of, of all things, the BBC telly. Night after night I explore the advertised visual attractions listed for us in the *Radio Times* and night after night I settle for the steam radio (its high standard a perpetual astonishment and delight), or a book, or, on the gramophone, a tuneful selection from *The Arcadians*. The radio is, as we know, competing, apart from its inter-programme rivalry, with little but itself. On the other hand, the BBC telly seems to me to be for ever envious of ITV and those quite extraordinarily weird Top Ten ratings and is prepared now to go to any appalling extreme of idiocy and cheapness and vulgarity to try to sink itself also into the ten programmes that most people (who? how totted up? where? and, indeed, why?) allegedly gaze at. There are the dread words 'a new comedy series', apart unfortunately from the word 'series', a misnomer if ever there was one. The spirits droop, and my giant Luxivision Bellevox with the improved 'notadazzle' screen stands electrically inoperative in the corner, exactly where it deserves to be.

However, what with attempting to understand and appreciate all that is presented to us on the Third Programme, coupled with my nightly cooking endeavours, my evenings pass in a great whirl of activity, twiddling my dials here, adjusting my seasonings there. The Third is far from being as high and dry as it once was and gone are the days when splendid H. L. Colwin could satirically envisage (in a NS competition, of course) an imaginary 6.30 p.m. item as 'Dr Q. Humptsch has recently calculated the value of pi to twenty thousand decimal places. Tonight he will read the complete series of figures he has obtained. Part I. The first ten thousand places (Repeat Thursday, 6 p.m.)'.

As to the non-BBC telly attractions, whatever can one say? There is that American gentleman with no hair who, I am told, solves problems connected with crime, though I always leave him long before the dénouement, *totally* mystified by the assorted goings-on. There are those other two, the ones who shoot about in fast cars down alley-ways and seem to be on the side of law and order. I tuned in originally, hoping that the 'Hutch' part of the duet was going to be that delightful black singer, but no such luck.

I am afraid that it is in my nature to scoff a little at things I do not understand but all the same I have tried very hard in life not to be too much of a Philistine. I have pressed eagerly into modern art galleries and found myself gazing at a lump of stone with a hole in it and wearing on the top of it a jumble of metal reminiscent of blitzed railings from bomb-torn London streets. I have wondered what it could all mean, and why it should be called 'Ecstasy', and why indeed it should be priced at £12,000. I have stared, totally bemused, at an 'action' painting ('Thought for a June morning': £18,000) which merely carries one instantly back to nursery days and wet afternoons and spirited attempts to use every colour in those fascinating little squares of solid paint in the Windsor and Newton black enamel box.

The dear Third is now, as said, fairly plain sailing though I do nowadays sometimes hear pieces of modern music that sadly puzzle me. I cannot, in all seriousness, tell when the orchestra has finished tuning up and when it has launched itself desperately onto the notes suggested by the composer. The gap seems to be missing. And it is only when they, quite suddenly and without the least warning, stop playing that I know that the piece is over. I prefer to wipe from memory's slate all those jerky and unrelated and wiggly little sounds that have occurred between starting and stopping. But I am musically very uneducated and realise that such things are not for me. As the vast majority of the music played is still by Mozart and Haydn and other reliable old back-numbers, I can only suppose that the new pieces to which I refer are not for a lot of other people too.

So much for weighty cultural matters, but as I've mentioned cooking you'll naturally also want to know what you may expect to find at 'Myrtlebank' in the way of food. This tends to be weighty too. There is nothing starchless here. Our view is that God invented starch for some good purpose of his own, and one not to question as we stuff it vigorously down. Confidence in the Maker rules here. But don't go expecting too much. There is no dish provided under my roof that could be called in any way a gastronomic challenge. Just plain fare. If ever I were to write a cookery book (possibly decimating the country with my daring use of little-known fungi) I have the title all ready. It is one of the few really valuable lessons that Life has taught me. The title is *You Can't Hurry Potatoes*. My early days at the stove were spent glaring into a steaming saucepan at the glum, white, obstinate ovoids that lay sullenly below water level declining to be cooked. And then what? One turns away for a moment to baste one's leg and in a trice the potatoes have not only cooked but have flaked their outsides unattractively off, like snakes shedding their skins, thus turning what were to have been *pommes de terre nature*, liberally sprinkled with parsley, into *surprise de pommes de terre* (mashed).

I don't go in a lot for reading cookery books myself. As with learning to ride a bicycle, no hour of the theory of the thing is equal to five minutes of practice. And so, impelled by one of nature's basic needs, hunger, topped by a good bit of greed, I dart to my *cuisine* (*garantie au beurre*) and create my culinary marvels. In point of fact, some of them *taste* more or less all right. It's just that they look so depressingly awful – Sit-down Soufflé, Sludge Stew, and Melancholy Pudding. But if you're short-sighted, hasten to my door. I can always do another spud or two.

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Letters to the Editor

Home Truths from Abroad

Sir, Fred Inglis ('Patriotism and the Left', NS 12 August) deplores the inability of socialist politicians to laugh and be funny. I disagree with him, but I have to admit that it is sometimes difficult to detect the hidden humour of politicians and, for that matter, also of the NEW STATESMAN. During the past few years, however, the NEW STATESMAN has done a lot to become a funnier newspaper. I read with pleasure your discussion of 'EEC' problems. (Did you notice the joke? In the rest of the European Community we changed the name long ago, because many of us, if not most, eventually want the EC to become a political unity, a Federal Europe). Fred Inglis himself is very funny – he is meant to be, I'm sure. He defines patriotism against nationalism. But what I see on many of your pages seems to be nationalism, even imperialism. Your eyes are almost closed to countries outside the borders of your former Empire, and prejudiced to a high degree if you report on countries on the Continent.

Mr Tony Benn can be hilariously funny. In his recent *Spiegel* interview he called the British the most intelligent people of the world. This, surely, is a way of proving his patriotism. Maybe you'll shrug this off as the comments of a necessarily nationalistic German. Maybe you are right, but funnily enough, I have always regarded myself as an Anglophile, and for many years I have wanted nothing more than for you to join us in the Community and bring more rationalism into our policies. I also hoped you would help us with social democratic policies. Besides, that is also the reason why I am a long-time subscriber to the NEW STATESMAN. But when I read some contributors to your paper and watch the leaders of Labour, I get the impression that, after all, it would be better if you opted out again.

I wonder whether this feeling is German or Continental nationalism? Being a Continental nationalist and an Anglophile at the same time: is that possible at all? The reason for being able to be both at the same time is perhaps to be found in the fact that so many representatives of our nation's politicians and journalists are in the same degree arrogant, stupid, nationalistic (and not patriotic), unable to laugh at themselves. They take themselves seriously, they are deadly serious missionaries of their political creeds – and that is one main source of their being so funny to watch. But I also believe that it is one main source of the many mistakes they make.

PETER HOESCHELE

c/o Goethe-Institut
Chang Chung Dong
Chung-Ku, Seoul

Sir, What a relief to have Fred Inglis instead of James Fenton! At last someone with vision! A revivifying breath of fresh air from one who has kept his eye on the basic principles of human community and is not afraid to mention fraternity and loyalty and a whole list of intangibles (long-suffering, gentleness, truth) which are being lost sight of in the clamour about material goods and the envy and hate surrounding it. It is a long time since I saw the word 'right' and 'wrong' used in the NEW STATESMAN in their primary moral meaning.

It is frightening to see society – any kind of society – which has been painfully constructed over thousands of years, disintegrating before one's eyes because its members reject all the common 'rules of the game' which make it possible for individuals to live together at all. Society has taken a long time to build and it can (and may) be destroyed within a single generation.

So I was correspondingly disappointed that your 'Letters to the Editor' (NS 19 August) stuck to all the old clichés, particularly about patriotism, nationalism, etc. I am all for the Cornishman emphasising his attachment to Cornwall; but I suppose that nevertheless he feels more identity with England (or Britain) than he does with, say, China, Morocco or the USA. As for the argument that one can't speak of one's country if one does not 'own' any part of it – when I say England is my country I mean I belong to it rather than that it belongs to me. Though I have lived in Switzerland for nearly 30 years, England is still 'my country'.

Although I have worked all my life and been paid for it, I never felt I was 'selling' myself. I am not accustomed to think of my humble contribution to life is such commercial terms. Carry on, Fred Inglis! Keep the essentials before us so that humanity does not return to barbarism.

MARGARET MANGAN

12 Avenue Léon Gaud
Geneva

The Great Australian Emptiness

Sir, In his article (NS 5 August) on Australia Michael Dean trots out the tired old clichés which anyone who has actually been to Australia is usually able to discard. I am not Australian and in my visits there I knocked about like any other visitor but Mr Dean's piece is so false that I must reply – mostly in schoolboy fashion.

When we consider that something like half the Australians were not born in Australia the cultural identity that has been achieved is remarkable. Mr Dean wonders why talented Australians go abroad and suspects it is to find 'true stimulus'. It could be that they are not afraid to compete in a world arena and do not find Australia comparable in size with the UK or the USA. It is commendable that they are not content to sit at home and be big fish in a small pond as so often happens in the UK. Was it perhaps in search of Mr Dean's 'true stimulus' that the best British writer (Beckett) and the best British artist (Bacon) have both chosen to live abroad?

Sydney Opera House is to my mind the most effective piece of monumental architecture ever built. Mr Dean is horrified that it was designed by a Dane. I would regard the ability to choose the best design – from wherever it came – as a remarkable lack of the sort of provincial chauvinism that would have occurred in the UK. If we also mention the Adelaide Festival Centre and the Melbourne Arts Centre we find an investment in culture that is unmatched in the UK.

Mr Dean has picked on individual points to support a prejudice. What does it all add up to? It adds up to something which many visitors find puzzling and upsetting – and Mr Dean amongst them. Surprisingly Australia is *not* provincial and many people cannot forgive this. Even Perth – the most isolated city in the world – is not provincial. By provincial I mean small-town, small-world, know-it-all complacency and concern only with the back garden. Australia has tended to look outwards and to acknowledge world opinion. Newspapers and magazines are full of world events. In many ways Australia is less provincial than London and the UK. The other aspect which a certain type of visitor cannot forgive is the absence of a pseudo-culture. A

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MAO TSETUNG
Volume V

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Chairman Mao Tsetung's Works, the Central
Committee of the Communist Party of China

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pseudo-culture is a coterie of semi-talented people who sit around and write pretentiously about each other. Australians admire excellence and they admire individuality but they do not like pretentions and are not impressed by mediocrity. A culture with mediocrity in a custodial position, as in the UK today, dislikes individualism, is obsessed with history (always the refuge of the semi-talent) and acclaims mediocrity. Could Mr Dean list for me the major cultural achievements of the UK in the last 30 years? A great contribution in pop culture, but where else? When did the last philosophical idea of importance emerge from the UK? Above all Australia has the quality of innocence and vigour that tired cultures tend to envy. Far from being a cultural desert, I see Australia becoming the future centre of cultural energy.

EDWARD DE BONO

Cranmer Hall
Fakenham
Norfolk

Sir, Michael Dean said a great deal that was to the point in his article. However, when he referred to the cultural scene down-under he might, in fairness, have mentioned that the Australians have done a damn-sight more for their writers and their local film industry than we have in this country.

One of the first acts of the Labour Government when it was elected in 1974 was to establish a non-statutory public lending right scheme for authors from which now all Australian authors benefit. We have been promised such a scheme over here for years and are still arguing about it. Secondly, the Labour Government gave enormous support to local directors, screen-writers and publishers with the result that Australia now has a strong, viable and truly indigenous film industry while ours is in disintegration.

TED WILLIS

5 Shepherds Green
Chislehurst, Kent

Words and Meanings

Sir, Paul Addison's use of the phrase 'militant suffragettes' in his review (NS 12 August) prompts me to offer a comment about the way terms were normally used in the struggle for votes for women in the first two decades of this century. All the people who wanted votes for women were 'suffragists'. Those who undertook civil disobedience for the cause called themselves 'militants' or 'militant suffragists', and other suffragists referred to them in the same way. 'Suffragettes' was the term used by the popular press to refer to the militants: on the whole it was not meant to be friendly, and the militants did not welcome it.

I should be very surprised to find references to "militant suffragettes' before 1920; or, indeed, before 1960. The phrase would have rung as awkwardly as 'patriotic nationalists'; at one level the two words mean the same thing, and at another level the adjective was originally favourable and the noun was originally unfavourable.

TREVOR LLOYD

4 Leinster Square
London W2

Praise for Poe

Sir, Since Poe's lyric 'To Helen' hardly needs defending by anyone anywhere, Mr Amis in his reply to my letter of 19 August conveniently forgets his myopic castigation of the poem (NS 5 August) and harps on the 'chunks of verbiage' I use in defending Poe and even adds the insult that they are typically American. (Obviously American critics must have a monopoly on this method; perhaps they chunk better because of their mechanical prowess!)

Be that as it may it is with Mr Amis's conclusion about the low state of American poetry that I take particular exception. How low are Whitman, Dickinson, Stevens, Masters, Millay, Eberhart, Wheelock, Williams, Van Doren, Wylie, Lowell, Frost, Robinson, Lindsay, Benet, Teasdale, Markham, Wilbur, Pound, Colum, Coatsworth, Plath?

The wrist-slap about my use of the word 'opus' is really pitiful (OED No. 1 – '*Opus*: a work, especially a composition . . .').

CHARLES A. WAGNER

52 Lower Sloane Street
London SW1

Back to the Land

Sir, While I have sympathy for the lonely tractor driver ('Skills and Changes', NS 19 August) surely Naomi Mitchison would agree that the real victims of the strait-jacket of modern farm technology are the livestock? Pigs, imprisoned breeding machines. Veal calves crated like machine parts, often in darkness, unable to lie down or turn around, thus ensuring the paleness of their flesh. Poultry, caged together so tightly that their beaks have to be removed to stop them injuring each other in their frustration. Feeding exclusively on mash, their beaks are superfluous.

The countryside may still *look* idyllic, when driving through the green lanes (they do exist) but I do not recommend the sensitive to pay much attention to the long windowless buildings they may glimpse now and then, otherwise they will not enjoy their lamplit dinner at Ye Olde Hostelry.

MARGARET DANKS

Droitwich Spa
Worcs.

Household Gods

Sir, I live in rooms once occupied, in about 1810, by Matthew Gregory ('Monk') Lewis. I should like to hear from anyone with Monk Lewis material to dispose of – portraits, or engravings from such letters; a first edition, or the illustrated 1926 edition of *The Monk*; a first edition, or Mona Wilson's 1929 edition, of *The Journal of a West Indian Proprietor*; a portrait of Tita, the Venetian who was Lewis's servant after he had been Byron's; and any other such memorabilia.

Another occupant of these rooms, around 1837, was Charles Egremont of *Sybil*. Does any reader know of an illustrated edition of Disraeli's novels that would provide a plausible likeness of my distinguished, if fictional, predecessor?

CYRIL RAY

K1 Albany
Piccadilly
London W1

Dogs and Dr Johnson

Sir, Not surprisingly, it is A. J. P. Taylor (London Diary 12 August) who is right about cats and dogs and Dr Johnson, and the glib Alastair Forbes who is wrong (Letters 19 August). The statement 'No dog is mentioned in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*' is not contradicted by Boswell's inclusion of 'If you call a dog Hervey, I shall love him', as the dog that Johnson talks of as merely a product of his own supposition, not a real dog at all. So there is still 'no dog mentioned' in Boswell's *Life*'. Had Mr Taylor said 'Dogs are not mentioned in Boswells *Life*', or 'Johnson never talked of dogs', then there would have been something to contest.

CHRISTOPHER EDWARDS

Hollybank Road
West Byfleet, Surrey

Bicycling Made Easy

Sir, If 'knickerbockered Edwardians made devotional bicycle rides' to George Meredith's Surrey home (Jonathan Keates's review, NS 5 August) and then went away with 'an autographed copy to nurse on the 4.15 from Leatherhead', what happened to their bicycles?

Did anyone buy used cycles from George Meredith?

J. R. S. DAVIES

55 Warren Road
London E4

One Up

Sir, I am grateful to A. J. P. Taylor (London Diary, NS 19 August) for his information on what Americans do to relieve the tedium of their existence. We know already what the English do to relieve the tedium of theirs, now that we have seen the outcome of the recent sporting events in Lewisham and Ladywood, as well as those at or on the way to or from various football grounds. Apparently, however, the Americans, amazing people that they are, read.

J. F. T. SPENCER

10 West Grove
London SE10

Far Flung Corners

Sir, My success as a 'Crossworder' (three prizes out of a modest number of entries), leads me to offer some advice to the frustrated Messrs Hopkins, Vaughan and Bottle. The secret is to address the envelope to the Chief Executive, Competition Complex. It is not generally known that Setsquare is the power behind the scene at Great Turnstile, and like many great men, vanity is his weakness.

May I also express my disappointment that, whilst Mr Hopkins's original comment related to the frequency of winners coming from *desirable* overseas locations, in subsequent correspondence the adjective disappeared. I trust the omission was not due to my entry from this address being successful on the same day as Mr Hopkins. If it was, I assure you that Malvern, while not the most desirable suburb of Melbourne (that honour must lie with either Moonee Ponds or Highett), has a particular charm which its residents, and others, treasure.

M. C. MARKS

3/17 Sorrett Avenue
Malvern
Australia

Sir, The crossword controversy started with a reader's complaint of your favouring entries sent in from abroad. But surely some slight consideration would be more than reasonable. Foreign competitors have more difficult conditions; they often lack knowledge of topical references and have less time at their disposal for solving. Postal services being what they are, we in Jutland, Denmark, usually receive our NS on the Friday in the week after publication, which means that our solution must catch the last clearance (1.30 p.m.) next day, to be sure of reaching Great Turnstile by Tuesday morning.

Having already won once (at that time a 15/- book token) what really interests me is whether you keep records and see to it that the same reader does not win twice. If I knew this to be the case it would save a lot of postage (13p on foreign letters!) and leave our Friday evenings free for other occupations.

OLGA UHLSTRUP

Magnoliarcy 21
8260 Vilby
Denmark
We don't [illegible]

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Anthony Howard

Inside the Goldfish Bowl

The BBC: Public Institution and Private World by TOM BURNS *Macmillan* £8.95

Early in the 1960s Tom Burns, who is Professor of Sociology at Glasgow University, became an occasional speaker at the 'management conferences' that the BBC still delights to hold at 'Uplands', its country mansion just outside High Wycombe. Intrigued by the glimpse he had been given of life within the BBC goldfish bowl, he subsequently applied for permission to pursue his researches further on the BBC's own working premises: rather to his surprise, his request was granted. Accordingly, during the early part of 1963 Professor Burns interviewed some 200 BBC employees in an effort to establish a view of the organisation from within. Thereafter, like a good and dutiful sociologist, he prepared a lengthy 'working report' and sent it in to the BBC late in 1964. It is not quite plain what kind of reaction he expected, but the one he got hardly comes as a surprise to those used to the ways (and wiles) of the BBC's own brand of mandarins:

> It was quickly made clear to me that their sole interest in the report was in preventing its publication . . . Not only so but the Administrative Division went to what seemed to me at the time insulting lengths to prevent what I am sure they would have called 'leakages'.

All this, of course, at the same time as assuming a mask of benevolence towards the contents of the report itself – thereby enabling Professor Burns to catch very early on the authentic tones of the BBC Brahmin:

> 'Speaking for myself, and I think for those who have also read it, it is certainly interesting, and more than interesting, fascinating. It is also reasonable and balanced but within its own restricted confines only, and provided that you do not take these words as meaning agreement with everything in it . . .'

Anybody who has ever had any contact with what the BBC is pleased to call its 'Directorate of Public Affairs' will recognise the techniques only too well.

Professor Burns, however, was not so easily to be put off. He merely bided his time and, having craftily noticed that by 1972 the whole BBC Board of Management had changed from what it had been at the time of his earlier rebuff, reopened the matter with the new Director-General, Charles Curran. This time he was rewarded not only with permission to publish but also with active encouragement to bring his findings up to date with a fresh series of interviews with at least some of those whom he had talked to a decade earlier. The result is the present book, a more than useful companion volume to the BBC's own house history being completed by Asa Briggs.

Like Lord Briggs, Professor Burns starts his story with Reith – and no one can complain about that. For with the BBC, the past is not so much prologue as part of the historic present. Reith's hand, indeed, continued to shape the internal organisation of the Corporation right up to the time at the end of the 1960s that the BBC, following (or perhaps merely coinciding with) the McKinsey recommendations, decided to go in for 'line management'. At least until 1968 the distinction, first imposed by Reith in 1933, between the role of 'management' on the one side and of 'output' on the other had been rigorously drawn. The original notion, of course, had been to protect 'the creative chaps' from the worries and preoccupations of administration – to leave them, as it were, free to do their own thing unencumbered by more mundane concerns and anxieties.

There was always, however, a fly in that particular soothing ointment. For, as Professor Burns shrewdly points out, once 'mundane concern and anxieties' are shed, so all too often is power as well. That, indeed, could be said to be a lesson that both the academic staff of American universities and the medical staff of British hospitals have each recently learnt to their cost. Very much the same development seems to have taken place within the BBC – once Rear-Admiral Carpendale had seen to it that the producers and broadcasters should, in the famous phrase, 'always be on tap but never on top'.

When, therefore, towards the end of the 1960s the BBC 'industrialised' itself and moved towards the creation of 'product divisions' – in which the managing directors of radio, television and overseas broadcasting were given full responsibility for all expenditure in their own spheres – it looked as if a major revolution had occurred, especially as the managing directors in each case happened to be people who had come up through the 'output' side. At last the reign of the BBC's own race of 'non-playing captains' – 'all', as Andrew Boyle of the *World at One* used to say, 'with their sweat-glands removed' – seemed over.

Did, though, putting programme people into the driving-seat make the BBC into a healthier and happier place? It is here, I think, that Professor Burns's interviews yield their most rewarding findings. Whereas in 1963 (when the grey-flannel suits were still broadly in charge) he discovered a sympathetic, if slightly patronising, attitude towards a by then rather diffident administrative establishment, in 1973 he detected a general feeling of resentment, if not of actual paranoia, towards a by now very active and energetic management. His own conclusion is, I suspect, the right one: that, whether consciously or not, by turning programme-makers and even broadcasters (like Ian Trethowan, the incoming D-G) into administrators, the BBC had by the early 1970s restored to management the same kind of ascendancy that it had enjoyed in the days of Admiral Carpendale 40 years earlier. The poachers, in fact, proved to be highly effective gamekeepers.

Professor Burns even argues that it was precisely because the early 1960s coincided with the twilight of the old school of management that it witnessed the creative flowering that it did: a diversity of approaches – some of them irreverent and inconoclastic – moved in to take advantage of the collapse of the old system of control and consensus. It is a persuasive argument – if only because it is difficult to imagine anyone today under the new, disciplined system of 'line management' being allowed a tithe of the initiative and independence that Donald Baverstock was able to display with *Tonight* in the late 1950s or even Ned Sherrin with *That Was The Week That Was* in the early 1960s. It is not perhaps a coincidence that those whom Professor Burns interviewed in 1963 tended to think of themselves as working '*in* the BBC', whereas ten years later they were all in no doubt that they were working '*for* the BBC'.

However, irreverent outposts apart, what has been the general effect on the BBC's output? Over this, I have to confess, Professor Burns strikes me as taking an unduly melodramatic view. He argues that, having worked for 30 years in pursuit of the public good, the BBC – as a new ICI or GEC – is now pursuing a quite different goal, professional excellence; and, worse, that the price it has had to pay for its freedom to do so is accepting serving the national interest (rather than ministering to the public good) as the ultimate test for all it does. Indeed, rather to my surprise, Professor Burns eventually emerges as something of an unreconstructed Reithian himself:

> Misguided and intolerant though he may have been, Reith's conception of broadcasting as a public service, of a BBC imbued with a sense of mission, of the people who worked in it as a community dedicated to the public good was, I believe, wholly appropriate. It is also the only conception which makes political and economic sense, perhaps especially in the present situation of this country. It is also the only conception which has a hope of superseding the miscellany of values and purposes compounded of individual commitments to professionalism, to careers, to managerial efficiency, to saving money or making money, which are the prevailing currency.

Oh dear, it's that old messianic message again – the same one that once allowed Reith himself to talk so ill-advisedly of the importance of the BBC enjoying 'the brute power of monopoly' (thereby virtually ensuring the coming of commercial television). No doubt, the BBC today suffers from any number of faults and some of them, I readily agree with Professor Burns, will need structural reforms to remove. But that does not mean that the answer is to return the BBC to the rule of the saints. Saints, after all, need to have an even shorter way with dissenters than anyone else: as for me, I'd rather be in the hands of professionals.

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Anthony Burgess

That's What It's All About

New Words for Old by PHILIP HOWARD
Hamish Hamilton £3.95

As I am one of the writers rebuked by Mr Howard of *The Times* for using gibberish, I must tread very carefully. Admittedly, it was not what I wrote but what I said that he, rightly, found fault with. Asked by some interviewer about violence in one of my books, I said incautiously: 'That's what life's all about, isn't it?' Mr Howard describes the phrase *that's what it's all about* as 'a mindless bit of parrot jargon, much in vogue with sports commentators to describe some generally inconsequential fact that has little to do with the matter in hand'. It seems to be in order to roar the line at the end of each verse of the 'ludicrous dance' called the Okey Cokey (which Mr Howard decockneyfies through aspiration), but it just will not do in educated (that is, possessing as one of its parameters correctly placed aspirates) speech.

The trouble about being prescriptive for spoken language is that speech is so swift that both diagnosis and prescription come too late for cure of its diseases. When one speaks one is always horrified at what one is saying, and one goes miserably on, still horrified and horrifically impotent. If one is Samuel Johnson or Bernard Levin (also of *The Times*), one can speak like a book and get away with it, but speech has properly nothing to do with books. Speech is the primary reality, loose, inexact, crammed with solecisms, its grammar atrocious, but it is what human communication is all about. Mr Howard concerns himself, very valuably, with lexical misuse, but it is in the nature of speech to malapropise, spoonerise and appropriate the bad habits of one's interlocutors. I had a man on the telephone from New York only yesterday who kept using *hopefully* as though it were *hoffentlich*. I found myself seduced by the abusage and ended up (horrified naturally) by saying: 'Hopefully then I'll hear from you on Monday.' But in writing I would not commit that solecism. Hopefully Mr Howard sets out to put people's writing right. He has picked all the words that the average *Times* letter-writer would regard as trouble-spots, and he deals with them sensibly and learnedly.

As a writer myself, though not to *The Times*, I examined my conscience diligently as I read him. I have not, I think, come out too badly. I have used *charismatic* in only one book, and there I made it apply to the autocephalic early churches that St Paul fulminated against. *Clinical*, alas, I have sinned with, but so has all the world. 'Journalists, advertising copywriters, and other magpies of technical terms have seized this sharp, precise word, and, as usual, got hold of the wrong end of the thermometer.' *Clinical*, which derives ultimately from *kline*, a bed, has to do with 'smoothing the fevered brow on the lace-edged pillow', but I have used it in phrases like 'He made love to her, coldly, clinically', and we read in advertisements of bathrooms and kitchens possessing functional, clinical lines. I think that, with me, it has something to do with going to municipal clinics as a child and hearing the clink or clinik of indubitably cold glass and metal. Of course, if you make love to someone clinically you usually do it on a bed, but such an appeal to etymology would not be likely to appease Mr Howard. How, incidentally (another word greatly abused, as here, now), do you get hold of the wrong end of the thermometer?

Gay has become a real nuisance. You can no longer dance the Gay Gordons, and *The Gay Divorce* (which has 'Night and Day' in it) must be retitled, just like, though for different reasons, *Prancing Nigger*. 'It is a paradox that it has been expropriated by one of the sadder groups of society' (does not Mr Howard perhaps mean 'appropriated'?). *Camp* has its uses, but it is too vague. Miss Penelope Gilliatt once wrote of 'camp tat', which is even sloppier than Mr Cliff Michelmore's 'After the bonanza came the crunch'. Mr Howard cannot properly *define* low camp as 'a female impersonator imitating Marlene Dietrich in a seedy nightclub', though he can present such a performance as an example. As for etymology, one lacks written evidence that *camp* derives from what went on in summer army camps in Hyde Park: ' "Going for a bit of camp" is alleged to have been the phrase used by the fops of the time' – the 19th century – 'who slipped under the awnings of the tents for assignations with the rapacious and licentious soldiery.' (Why, that might almost be Bernard Levin writing: defenders of the well of English undefiled seem much given to sonorous cliché.) Despite it, though (the written evidence, I mean) *camp* has to come from camp and not, as seems possible to some, the French *camper*. Philip Hope-Wallace read somewhere: 'Monsieur Pont a su camper le rôle de Rigoletto avec dignité.' That to me sounds like regular usage: to set up, establish, fix. The most interesting *camp* in the world is that *campé* by 'Les Girls' in Sydney NSW, obviously evoking the spirit of a camp concert of Anzac days.

As for *ethnic*, Mr Howard neatly says: 'We are all ethnics under the skin.' And not only under it, one would have thought. To make it mean, as in America, 'supposedly lesser breeds just inside the Law' is silly, but Mr Howard is reconciled to it by New Testament koine usage, which makes it mean heathen or Gentile. 'A part of the temple fell down and made a great destruction of *ethnics*' (1375). The pejorative kind of semantic change has always been commoner than the meliorative, human nature being what it is, and Mr Howard shows how *student* is coming to mean irresponsible young layabout, just as *research* can signify the looking up of telephone numbers and the riffling through of stacks of old press cuttings.

And see what happens to *theology* in the usage of people like Sir Harold Wilson, who contemptuously fires it at unpragmatic Labour ideologues: 'Let's forget the theology', and so on. Theology to Sir Harold means calculating the number of angels that can dance on a needle-point. Readers of *The Times* seem to have established that no theologian has ever concerned himself with such a trivial question (to which the answer has always been known, anyway). *Metaphysical* and *academic* are also used as terms of abuse by pragmatic politicians. But such people inhabit a world whose lexis is as shaky as its motivations are hypocritical, and it is probably true to say that all semantemes used by politicians are suspect. What is *socialism*? *Democracy*? What is a *Trot*? Because I have never cared for the Joannine reforms, I am regularly condemned as *fascista* in the left-wing Italian press. We come to the end of the line with *truth* and *good*, dangerous value words, says Mr Howard, quoting Auden:

> Leave Truth to the police and us; we
> know the Good;
> We build the Perfect City time shall
> never alter.

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D. J. Enright

Poem Translated from a Foreign Language

My mother once told me
Never to sleep with flowers in the room
Since then I have never slept
With flowers.

I have slept with prostitutes
(But never with flowers in the room).
In general they were amiable
A few were not unhumorous
One was rather acid.

None of them smothered me.
One of them desired a silver pen
Another removed a traveller's cheque
But never my precious oxygen.

My mother never told me
Not to sleep with prostitutes in the room
She did not tell me to stay awake.
These days I sleep with pills
I sleep with daffodils in the room.

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We need to have books like Mr Howard's from time to time – salutary knuckle-raps to which, alas, only people already concerned about language will respond. For the rest, *nescius*, meaning ignorant, becomes *nice*, and St Audrey is forced to preside over cheap trinkets won at a fair. Language is not, however, merely words: it is rhythm, tone, deliberate lexical abuse for aesthetic ends. Communication can survive even the most brutal verbal falsifications, and the history of language, as Mr Howard knows well, is a record of deviation from fixed semantic positions. Let Dr Johnson have the last word: 'It remains that we retard what we cannot repel, that we palliate what we cannot cure.' Or was it Bernard Levin who wrote that?

Peter Porter

In the Fact

Between Two Worlds: Byron's Letters and Journals, Vol. 7 edited by Leslie A. Marchand *John Murray* £6.50

Byron's handwriting, which was copiously displayed at the big 150th anniversary exhibition at the V & A in 1974, and is permanently to be seen at Newstead, is extraordinarily modern in appearance. Large, scrawling and punctuated almost entirely by dashes, it might come from some examination paper at a comprehensive school. It's as if Byron were signalling his sympathy with our age across 150 years of more decorous literature. This illusion, however, is part of our remaking of Byron in our own image, which Mr Marchand's new edition of the letters has done much to foster. The letter-writer and the author of *Beppo*, *The Vision of Judgment* and *Don Juan* are clearly the same person, but what of the Byron who thrilled his contemporaries and inspired poets in every European language – the legend-maker who wrote *Childe Harold*, *The Corsair* and *Manfred*?

Our taste may be the true one, but to maintain it we have to tidy away three quarters of his output and discount the very works which made him famous. In this volume of the letters, he writes to John Murray in London that an Italian lady, having read some of *Don Juan* in French translation and hearing from Byron that he thought it would live longer than *Childe Harold*, told him she 'would rather have the fame of *Childe Harold* for three years than an Immortality of *Don Juan*'. This was the opinion of almost everybody at the time, from his London cronies and Harriette Wilson to the Countess Guiccioli, Shelley alone dissenting. Reading the letters in their full and uncensored texts establishes the realistic Byron even more completely, and widens the gap between our appreciation of the man and of the romantic poet. But it also helps give shape to the otherwise haphazard pattern of his life – his true progress being the coming together of the man of the correspondence with the poet, until in *Don Juan*, he writes poetry even more succinct, stylish and life-like than the prose he had always written in his letters.

But poets' biographies (and Byron's letters amount to a full autobiography) are often too interesting – they lead us away from the poetry, or are welcomed as a more attractive alternative to it. This seventh volume of letters records Byron's life at a quiet but critical time. At the end of 1819, he had left Venice and the Palazzo Mocenigo to live in Ravenna. In this isolation in the Romagna ('among the Ostrogoths', he liked to call it), he wrote frequently to Hobhouse, Kinnaird and Murray in London, chiefly asking for news from home, especially about the trial of Queen Caroline for adultery, and to try to control his complicated monetary affairs, especially his court-case over the rights of the tenancy at Rochdale Manor. It is amusing to read him fuming to Kinnaird, his banker, and Hanson, his legal agent, to get his money out of the British Funds, since he is certain there will be war in Italy and then the Funds will sink out of sight, taking his income with them. Byron the lover of liberty appears in many of these letters as Byron the conservative, teasing Hobhouse for the company he keeps – 'Orator' Hunt, for one, with his connection with Thistlewood and the Cato Street conspirators – and complaining that, though he was not against reform, 'radical' was a new word since his time. Even more involving are the letters about literary matters, chiefly chiding Murray for not responding to the poems and articles Byron sent him – Cantos 3 to 5 of *Don Juan*, the translation of Canto 1 of Pulci's *Morgante Maggiore*, *The Vision of Dante* and his closet drama, *Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice*. This last work gives the modern reader a chance to check back on his reaction to the romantic Byron of tradition – side by side in letters. Byron's speedy and always living prose confronts the stilted lines of *Marino Faliero*, as he sends corrections back to London. We are not wrong, after all, to pick the real Byron from his vast verse production – he is an 18th century realist, modernised by Romanticism. This is also the personality who lives so vividly in the letters.

To this day Ravenna is an unattractive and fugitive place. In Byron's time, it was well off the beaten track of the English in Italy, who only 'Florence'd and Rome'd' the country, as he put it. His liaison with Teresa, Countess of Guiccioli (rhymes with creaturely, as Gavin Ewart has observed most happily) kept him in the Romagna. For a time he lived in the Guiccioli palace, but the Count having caught him 'quasi in the fact' with his lady, a whole imbroglio ensued, ending with the Pope pronouncing a separation for Teresa, and Byron's role of 'Cavalier Servente' entering a new and more complicated stage. His remarks to his English friends on this Italian custom are amusing and down to earth. He calls it his Cavalier 'Servitude', but he also recounts how Italian women find it repugnant to have children except by the man they love, and how one woman miscarried in order to be available to her lover at the lying-in month. His letters to Teresa seem to my imperfect eye to be written in fluent Italian. She was only 21 at the separation and she annotated his letters in French in her own hand. One, which contained a rather rash promise of marriage, is decorated with the device, 'Promesse!!!! d'être mon Epoux!'

While at Ravenna, Byron wrote also to Tom Moore in Paris and to Hoppner, the British Consul at Venice. From this period come his amusing but unpleasant references to Keats – the 'miserable self-polluter of the human mind' passage being attached to a strange anecdote about a London prostitute who used to hang an Italian musician for his pleasure and one day, in pursuit of a pint of gin, forgot to cut him down in time. Such, Byron asserted, was Keats's way with poetry. Wordsworth appears always as Turdsworth, and there are many funny stories for collectors of the higher filth. Byron can be touching, too, as when he

by the author of the recent series of New Statesman articles

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writes to his wife of his love for his sister Augusta: 'I may say it now – for we are young no longer.' His rebukes to Murray at London's non-appreciation of *Don Juan* are full of fine things. He steadfastly refused to amend and rewrite his verse – 'I am like the tyger (in poesy) if I miss my first Spring – I go growling back to my Jungle. – There is no second. – I can't correct'. His letters are all first springs, and they always hit their mark.

Paul Johnson

Good Boots

Inside Asquith's Cabinet: from the Diaries of Charles Hobhouse edited by Edward David *John Murray* £6.25

When Charles Hobhouse died in 1941 he was not thought interesting enough to be included in the *DNB*, an understandable decision. He came from a family of Bristol merchants (Byron's friend John Cam Hobhouse was a relation), later established in Wiltshire as landowners and baronets. He sat for 20 years or so as Liberal MP, and served Asquith as Financial Secretary to the Treasury and, in the cabinet, as Chancellor of the Duchy and Postmaster-General. When, in May 1915, Asquith decided that an election, due in 1916, would wreck his party, and that coalition was the only alternative, Hobhouse and others were unceremoniously dumped; he lingered on in the House until 1918, when he not only lost his seat but achieved a niche as the first cabinet minister to forfeit his deposit.

Hobhouse was a short, stocky man, with a bushy moustache and a hasty temper. He was an industrious minister who read his papers, but was otherwise of little account. Mr David has now edited a selection from his diaries, which he kept intermittently until he was sacked. The editorial commentary and notes are not always accurate (for example, Lord Fisher was not First Lord of the Admiralty in 1915, but First Sea Lord) and Mr David's assertion that the diaries are of 'absorbing interest' is not borne out by the text. There is little that is both significant and new, and much dubious gossip which should be treated with caution. Hobhouse half-admired Lloyd George but thought him a rotten 'administrator' and over-estimated even LG's amorality and powers of intrigue. I can well believe LG asked: 'Good heavens, if one mayn't tell lies at election times, when may one tell them?' But Hobhouse's account of LG's coalition intrigues with Balfour in 1911 does not ring true, for Balfour thought the idea a non-starter. Churchill, whom Hobhouse positively hated, is implausibly presented as a Machiavellian. It is not true, as Hobhouse reports, that Churchill encouraged the army in Ireland to mutiny in 1914, so that the Navy's loyalty should seem more meritorious; nor that he was one of those behind the May 1915 crisis, with the object of making himself supreme war-leader as head of a Department of Public Safety. It is a reflection on Hobhouse's judgment that he believed in this tale sufficiently to recount it in a letter to his friend Lord Buxton.

Hobhouse was disillusioned and waspish about life at the top. Grey was 'narrow, obstinate'; Haldane 'a dangerous man . . . tricky and not to be trusted'; Morley 'threatens resignation twice a week, and will never go till the Govt does'; McKenna 'attempts bonhomie, but is not sufficiently of a gentleman for it to be successful'; of Harcourt, 'everyone thinks that language is only employed by him to conceal thought'. Hobhouse conceded that Herbert Samuel was 'industrious, a good speaker and clear thinker'; but, he added, 'everyone thinks him absolutely self-centred and his whole horizon bounded by his own career. He would never have time to pick any unfortunate fellow creature out of the mire'. This proved to be true, for when Hobhouse was ousted in 1915, Samuel got his job. The diary sardonically records:

> 27 May. This morning I heard from Samuel that he deeply regretted supplanting a colleague, and only did it at the insistence of the PM. Unfortunately Jack Pease met him yesterday, and asked him how he *could* take the place of a friend and colleague, to which he had replied 'Oh well one must look after oneself.'

Hobhouse seems to have admired and liked Asquith, despite his drinking, laziness and cowardice in cabinet which, the diary repeatedly notes, led him to align himself with whichever group was the most numerous. But his tone changed when he fell a personal victim to Asquith's instinct for self-preservation. He correctly predicted that the coalition would, in time, lead to the ousting of Asquith and the disintegration of the Liberal Party.

The chief point of the diary is that it reflects the mind of a characteristic Liberal front-bencher brought up in the Gladstonian mould. Hobhouse believed in economy and the rights of property. He was not rich but comfortable; his house had five guest bedrooms but only one bathroom, reserved for gentlemen. His interests were shooting, stalking and cycling. He had no feeling for the workers. Touring Lancashire with George V and Lord Derby, he noted: 'not a single drunken man, and all the people were well dressed and tidy, the men shaved, and all had good boots and stockings . . . the women enthusiastic and all respectful.'

Like other upper middle-class Liberals, he disliked the House of Lords, distrusted the aristocracy and deplored the rapacity of royalty, accusing the widowed Queen Alexandra of 'trying to evade payment of super-tax, and income tax, and death duties'. King Edward, too, expected the taxpayers to pay for the baubles he gave as personal gifts on foreign tours. Otherwise, Edward liked clothes. Hobhouse reports that, when Sir Henry MacMahon came to the palace to give a verbal report on India, the King said at the end: 'It's all very interesting Sir Henry, but you should never wear a coloured tie with a frock-coat.' The new King, George V, was also 'much exercised as to what he ought to wear on his head at the opening of Parliament'. The willingness of the cabinet to spend time discussing such matters as this reminds us again of the world we lost in 1914.

Paul Addison

Rowse's Law

Their Finest Hour by GLEN ST JOHN BARCLAY *Weidenfeld* £4.95

Many historians writing about the summits of power are, I suspect, frustrated policy-makers. In their heart of hearts they see themselves running a big government department or, in the case of the more nostalgically inclined, some great tract of empire ripe for irrigation schemes, railways, and man management – virile stuff with tribal chiefs. There is probably an explanation here for the existence of so many monumental biographies of the two great types of enlightened bully in British history: the indoor type in Whitehall, and the fresh-air type in the midday sun.

An instinct for knocking the world into some kind of shape is as good a motive, on the elementary level, as any other for writing history, but there is one temperamental hazard involved. As a frustrated policy-maker you may begin to think that you could have run the past very much better than the people who were in charge. This will not be a big risk if you are at all introspective by nature, for you will then realise that muddle, myopia, and irrational impulses are second nature to you and everyone else. You will be able to see that power is a predicament, and sympathise with the struggles of policy-makers to remember what they decided yesterday, and why they ever thought it was a good idea at the time. But the confident extrovert may not take such things into account. With increasing bad temper he reads about the failure of leaders to take the right decisions. Seeing policy-making as a kind of board game like Diplomacy, he can tell you that as the game stood in, say, January 1941, it was obvious that the British should have concentrated on Benghazi, not on Greece. By the application of logic he can prove Rowse's law – that the past was constantly falling into the hands of silly asses.

Glen St John Barclay has convinced me, in a way, that Britain during its finest hour was run by a parcel of fools. He tells the story of imperial strategy from the fall of France to the German invasion of Russia. Trying to run the war on their own, the British and Dominion leaders tried to do too many things at once and thus failed in all of them. Presiding over his 'dream factory' in London, Churchill dispersed Britain's flimsy resources in the Mediterranean and the Middle East into all the wrong places. The dream of establishing a Balkan front perished with the wreck of the e

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pedition to Greece; meanwhile the Germans had been allowed to build up a massive threat to Egypt. Egypt was in fact held more by luck than judgment, and having almost lost the Middle East, the British were left to await salvation at the hands of Russia and the United States.

Dr Barclay is wonderfully rude about all the damned fools he encounters along the way. A Reader in History at the University of Queensland, he is particularly conscious of the overbearing fashion in which Churchill treated Australia and New Zealand, exploiting their forces in the Middle East at the expense of security in the Pacific. Nonetheless he chastises one and all with impartiality. New Zealand's General Freyberg 'could usually be counted on to misunderstand a situation'. The Australian General Blaney was an expert in passing the parcel: 'Nobody could have become Commissioner of Police in Victoria without knowing when to come in out of the rain.' Smuts of South Africa, the 'bushveldt Merlin', was 'ever ready to provide the worst possible advice at the worst possible time'. Many writers have taken a charitable view of Wavell, the British commander in the Middle East, who was relentlessly bullied by Churchill. But this time he too bites the dust. He did not know how to fight the Germans and 'probably never made a sound strategic decision unaided'.

A definite hierarchy of folly can be discerned in Dr Barclay's judgments. The Big Three among the bonehe:ads were Churchill, Eden and Smuts, and o. these Churchill was the greatest, frightening generals and admirals into submission. The second rank is occupied by the leading soldiers, Wavell and Dill, who would have resigned in protest had they been capable of holding their jobs in the first place. We then make our way through a cast of assistant fools with walk-on parts until we come across one or two men of true virtue who dared cross swords with Churchill, and cursed him vigorously in private. The hero of the book turns out to be the unsinkable Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet, Admiral Cunningham, whose defeat of the Italians at Taranto was 'the outstanding British victory of the Second World War'.

Verdicts like these, in various permutations, have been in circulation ever since 1941, and often in print. Not much news, then, except for the critical force and exaggerated tone of abuse which Dr Barclay has brought to bear. There may be some point n the constant attempt to reappraise individual reputations, but it seems to me uninpiring as an end in itself. Whether policynakers were right or wrong is a tiresome uestion which tends to substitute judgment oy results for understanding of motive and ituation. Towards the end of his book Dr Barclay remarks that the British were only aved from the consequences of their incomtetence by the equal stupidity of Hitler in ttacking Russia. Precisely: war is always onducted in a muddle as a contest beween rival systems of inefficiency. The ritish were no more incompetent than the rench, the Germans, the Russians, or the mericans. Why have war efforts always een so irrationally arranged? That *would* e an interestic

Jeremy Treglown

Not He

Beckett/Beckett: the Truth of Contradictories
by VIVIAN MERCIER *Oxford* £5

Beckett always takes away more with one hand than he has given with the other. If Joyce is the modern laureate of addition and multiplication, it is often said, Beckett is the spokesman for subtraction and division – and particularly for division in the self. One of his prose pieces ends with a characteristically deprecatory reference to the narrator's body 'doing its best without me', a kind of logical double-take similar to the punningly auto-destructive title of the piece, 'From An Abandoned Work' – abandoned because it is dissolute and despairing in mood, but also because it is incomplete. Unfinished works are inevitably self-questioning, but Beckett has turned the artistic scepticism they may represent into a principle that lies behind even his completest pieces. It would be hard to find a more terminated work than *The Lost Ones*, for example, yet its closing phrase reminds us that the most firmly constructed fictions are no more than forms of hypothesis:

> So much roughly speaking for the last state of the cylinder and of this little people of searchers one first of whom if a man in some unthinkable past for the first time bowed his head if this notion is maintained.

It's some aspects of this seesaw that Vivian Mercier is concerned with and refers to in his title, itself a double-entendre since the other main thread in the book is the relationship between the man and his work – Beckett as the generic name applied to a number of fictions, poems and plays, on the one hand, and on the other (as Mercier might well but doesn't in fact say) Beckett as human being. But if the echo of Barthes's *S/Z* made you afraid that it might be a structuralist critique, you can come out now. If there is anything new about the approach it's in the subjective, autobiographical, anti-scientific mode recently advocated by Leslie A. Fiedler as the answer to structuralist and Marxist methods:

> a renewed criticism . . . will be con-textual rather than textual, not primarily concerned with structure or diction or syntax, all of which assume that the work of art 'really' exists on the page rather than in a reader's passionate apprehension and response. Not words-on-the-page but . . . words-in-the-head, which is to say, at the private juncture of a thousand contexts, social, psychological, historical, biographical, geographical, in the consciousness of the lonely reader . . .

Whether or not Mercier has read Fiedler's essay, he certainly adopts its outlook. He describes how he went to the same school as Beckett, entering 'just over five years' after he left and following him at looked up to Beckett, S. because he had become 'the sort of avant-garde artist and critic that I longed to be', and in due course Beckett's work was discussed in a thesis for which Mercier got a Ph.D. from Trinity in 1945 (only a year, as it happens, before I myself was born in Holyhead, a well-known embarkation point for travellers to Ireland from Britain). Ever since, their lives have been strangely linked. Mercier has frequently reviewed new work by Beckett as it has appeared. He has written books and articles in which Beckett is discussed. And he has met him three times and received 'about a dozen' letters from him, 'one or two of which might be described as self-revelatory'. Again, like Beckett, he is an expatriate – a Professor of English at the University of California. So it's not surprising that Beckett's work often leads him to personal ruminations. 'The older I grow, the more vital it becomes to my psychic health that I should identify with Ireland' (he once tried to buy Beckett's childhood home). And it's understandable, in view of the way Beckett's own characters sometimes disparage their audience, that Mercier should seem to view his readers with a kind of weary disbelief. 'Where are all these corpses from?' Vladimir asks, gazing out into the auditorium in *Godot*, and in *Endgame* Clov points a telescope at us and announces 'I see a multitude in transports of joy. That's what I call a magnifier.' So, *mutatis mutandis*, Vivian Mercier: 'If the reader is by now prepared to tolerate the notion . . . perhaps he can

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be coaxed a little farther along the same path. Is it not possible that . . . ?' We are a slow lot, it is implied, who won't notice the odd bit of nonsense ('the only perfectly finished piece of workmanship is the miniature') and who need to be reminded about the basics.

All of which is a pity for two reasons. The first is that Mercier knows a great deal about Beckett and conveys much of it in a non-exhaustive way which, but for the unevenness of the book, would be very stimulating. As one would expect of the author of *The Irish Comic Tradition*, he is good on native elements, both social and artistic, in Beckett's work; but he also, for example, makes some extremely fruitful comparisons between Beckett's plays and those of Racine, on whom Beckett lectured as a young assistant at Trinity (though before Mercier got there). And Mercier's collection of 'antitheses' in Beckett's work – 'Gentleman/Tramp', 'Artist/Philosopher', 'Woman/Man' – contains topics which hold a lot of interest. The chapter 'Painting/Music', for instance, is exceptionally informative about what Beckett has actually seen and heard and when; it draws attention to the fact that whereas his taste in painting – in which he is a critic but not a practitioner – was avant-garde from an early stage, his taste in music – in which he is a keen performer from a family of enthusiasts – is conventional and Romantic.

The dichotomy brings one back to Beckett's dividedness and to the second cause for regret in Mercier's critical method. As an autobiographer he admits early on that his dislike for *Endgame* is related to a personal tragedy. He first saw the play when his wife was becoming increasingly disabled by what was later diagnosed as multiple sclerosis, and his response is still affected by the memory of her long, ultimately fatal illness. It is a chastening revelation that disarms reply. However much you like *Endgame*, you can't say Mercier is wrong not to. What *is* wrong, though, is precisely this pre-emptiveness in the subjective approach. Objectively expressed, Mercier's view of *Endgame* is that, unlike Beckett's other work, it contains no palliating optimism – in Mercier's terms, no dialectic. But this is untrue. Hamm has a speech which is never referred to in the book, though there is more than one chapter to which it is relevant. He says he once knew a madman 'who thought the end of the world had come' – the author, perhaps, of *Endgame:*

> I used to go and see him, in the asylum. I'd take him by the hand and drag him to the window. Look! There! All that rising corn! And there! Look! The sails of the herring fleet! All that loveliness! (*Pause.*) He'd snatch away his hand and go back into his corner. Appalled. All he had seen was ashes.

It's a typically self-critical moment, providing a new perspective on the play by introducing into it, in a familiar fashion, a brief but intense note of lyrical nostalgia. By an odd, and in the circumstances of course very sad irony, in writing off *Endgame* Mercier has deprived himself of one of the best examples of his own thesis.

Valentine Cunningham

Hanging In

Home Free by DAN WAKEFIELD *Granada* £4.50
The Fan by BOB RANDALL *Secker & Warburg* £3.90
Driftsand by PETER DE POLNAY *W. H. Allen* £4.50

Like the technicolour remake of the talkie remake of some unleavable-alone silent Hollywood goodie, Americans keep redoing *Pilgrim's Progress*. Huck Finn, *The Grapes of Wrath*, Jack Kerouac: being *On the Road* is still on the road and called, this time out, *Home Free*. Gene, an ageing student, is soldiering along a seven-year, four-college trip towards the Big BA. On the way he picks up with Lou, his History instructor, Barnes, a novelist, Flash, a would-be entrepreneur whose schemes keep going smash, and Thomas, pusher, trucker, and sitter-in on lectures at Northeastern, Boston U, Harvard, MIT. Lou doesn't last too long (she prefers crisper Steven, the Maths instructor) and, once degree-ed, Gene moves on, to Stella the Divorcée in Maine, to Lizzie of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, and other dames points west. It's an odyssey in which the parties get wilder, the sex funkier and the drugs harder until at the California coast, the edge of America, the last stop, peace of mind is purchasable only by heroin. Skag? 'It's not free', informs Phil, the Venice, Cal., supplier. 'Nothing ever is', agrees Gene.

It's moralistic conclusion alright, endorsed by the human waste all about – like Vietnam and Joplin's death – and by the scorn seeping through the narrative's rendering of Gene's too easily blown mind. 'Heavy, man. Did you make that up?' 'No', replies Mulligan, a chanced-on poet, 'T. S. Eliot made it up.' And *Moby Dick*? 'Heavy. That was one result of Gene's long rambling education. He may not have read all the shit but he'd heard of it.' Mostly, though, Dan Wakefield so much enjoys giving us this world of getting it on, of hitting and toking, of romantic questing for rural paradises where the girls are easy and the vegetables natural, that he forgets to try inciting us to scepticism. Gene 'hung in there, hitting the books, making every class, meeting all assignments no matter how chicken-shit' (and got six straight-A credits, natch): in phrases like those he's as doted on as the food his author keeps dolloping into him. And this novel is above all substantially about what American people choose to put into their mouths. The drugs, other people's sexual organs, of course, but in particular, food. This is a picaresque of ingestion, a non-gourmet safari:

> They alternated drinking gin and Four Roses and stuffed down frozen pizzas with lukewarm centres, peanut-butter sandwiches on raisin bread. Hostess Twinkies, Sarah Lee cheesecakes, cans of Chef Boy-ar-dee ravioli, pretzels, and potato-chips . . . With their 'meals' they drank Coke.

'Meals' is right. God needs to bless America if it's true you are what you eat.

More – and happily food-freer – Americana in Bob Randall's *The Fan*. It too, however, plumps for airing old genres, this time the epistolary novel. How misguided, evidently, to assume this mode died the death when Fielding put the boot into it with *Shamela*. An enticing, even enthralling, sequence of letters unbuttons for us the world of Sally Ross, a 50-plus Broadway star, infatuated with a young (too young, she discovers) lover, protected by her secretary Belle. None of the epistle-packing characters is especially likeable, though the wise-cracking abuse freely batted about between Sally, her ex-husband Jake and Belle, and the self-mockery of Sally (signing off as Mrs Macbeth, Lady Methusaleh, Madame Arbuckle, and such) are all genial enough.

However it's the pestering fan whose story grips you as it slowly unzips. The early assurances of admiration, the wheedling of signed photos to support his claims to chums that he's Miss Ross's agent, the gradually creepier talk of sexual degenerates – and then the boasts of big muscles and enormous 'equipment': it all exactly captures the dull menace of fantasy, of letters posted on loo doors and sent to *Men Only*. And the results are as grisly as the fantast's prose style: Belle slashed on the subway, a cop shot, Sally's life endangered, apparently reprieved, then taken 'in that most intimate of love acts, death'. A terrific chiller con carnage for the drawing-in evenings.

Somehow – too much time with latest translations from the Bulgarian, not enough trawling about down at the public library I shouldn't wonder – I'd never heard of Peter de Polnay until this week. At last I've caught up with blurbers Auberon Waugh and Anthony Burgess, if not quite with Derek Stanford ('ten years now . . . each fresh title . . . stimulated anew'). Mr de Polnay is worth catching up with too, but only just. *Driftsand*'s hero is a reviewer Felix Rammett, a Grand Old Man of the Sundays, at whose tasteful word novelist bow and publishers scrape. A likely story. Even less likely – much more fiction than reality – is his potbellied success with women. Monied Priscilla positively throws herself at him, Titian-red hair, burning bust and all.

Tastefully, of course, Felix reserves his rudeness for the weekending cottagers who squeeze mayonnaise out of tubes and for Francis Cotter, the writer whose father was a miner and who keeps Felix thinking of dripping and marge. Felix prefers the set-up at Priscilla's daddy's place in Somerset, unbelievably stagey though it be. So, it appears, does the novel, loving all the Wodehousianism while dwelling with fascinated horror on the low-bred procliviti and ambitions of the bunch of proles who kidnap Priscilla for ransom – the grisly couplings of ex-con Ken, and ex-SR Hazel's dreams of a lovely apartment in Benidorm. It serves Felix right when he loses Priscilla, and when a novelist has puffed carries off an older flame. Still, there are plenty more in the kind of novels that came from, the kind Peter de Polnay will doubtless go on writing.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

Meet Miss Tutin

Edinburgh Festival

One of the issues glancingly raised in Tom Stoppard's *Jumpers* is whether Edinburgh is the Athens of the north or the Reykjavik of the south; and those of us who have striven, against all the signs and symptoms, to take the more sanguine view were given a resounding smack in the chops in the first week of the festival, when the Tory council decided that the city-centre site long reserved for a new opera house should in fact be filled by yet another hotel. More beds for more tourists, all gathering in the gloaming to see – what? A conga of hall porters snaking through the streets of Auld Reekie, perhaps, or a sprightly mob of under-managers in Mactavish kilts and plastic sporrans tossing easy-to-open packs of make-it-yourself powdered tea to any bystander flashing his Diners' Club card.

Oh well, that might be more fun than the 'official' festival sometimes manages to be. This is not a particularly bad year: nor is it the strikingly good one I had hoped as I trotted into the Assembly Hall naïvely clutching my programmes for *Antony and Cleopatra* and *All for Love*. Alec McCowen and Dorothy Tutin, John Turner and Barbara Jefford – so lavish a helping of favourite performers, such treats in store! Unfortunately, a bureaucratic cock-up has occurred in the computer-room of Prospect Productions, and the wrong pair has been assigned to each play, the more cerebral to the bubbling bard, the glandular to skimpy Dryden. In the first case, at least, the loss is great. Indeed, there were times when one longed to leap onstage and make a few introductions. Mr McCowen, meet Miss Tutin. Miss Tutin, this gentleman here, the one in the baggy doublet and improbable ruff, is Mr McCowen. I'm sure you'll find you've a lot in common – eternity in your eyes and lips, for instance. Yes, dear, Mr McCowen's lips are those funny pink things, peeping out of his quick-stick glue-on beard, and his eyes are in the usual place, just above the nose.

Both players are technically expert, but somehow lacking in instinct. Mr McCowen, part 17th-century troll, part bar-room bore, swaggers jauntily about the stage slapping his thighs and bellowing 'haw, haw, haw', as if the Roman Empire was a shaggy-dog story. If it is possible to believe in him as a warrior and a lover, it is as a loud-mouthed RAF type, all too likely to clout Cleopatra on the back with a cry of 'chin up, old girl' before toddling off to prang Octavius. Miss Tutin is catlike, watchful and aloof, scarcely the woman to respond to an erotic approach as guileless as this. Unfortunately, the script insists not only that she does so with some enthusiasm, but that her very sighs and tears are 'greater tempests than almanacs can report'. Miss Tutin's compromise is to continue to look inscrutable while sounding breathless and vaguely Ruritanian, so that 'king' becomes 'keeeng' and 'Nile' a languid 'Naahel'. Altogether, it is a curious liaison, hardly the basis for a sound production: which is a pity, since Toby Robertson has coaxed out some nice supporting performances, notably Timothy West's grizzled Enobarbus and Derek Jacobi's grey, supercilious Caesar.

Perhaps the lovers would loosen up if they weren't constrained by costumes that reduce all of Rome and Egypt to an indistinguishable English-Jacobean: all, that is, bar Robert Eddison's soothsayer, who looks like a pharaoh stuck halfway through the process of being embalmed. Mr Eddison turns up again in *All for Love*, this time as a mouldering, bewigged eunuch who might just have tottered out of a London sedan chair. I somehow doubt if this is how the part was seen by Dryden, who lived at a time when exotic effects were fashionable; but the pinched formality does reflect the nature of the play, which is heavily in debt to the French neo-classicists, slaves all to regularity, propriety and the dramatic unities. Every now and then a line crackles into life, as Antony's summary of Caesar – 'oh, he's the coolest murderer, so staunch, he kills and keeps his temper'. So, though more rarely, does character – witness the verbal catfight between Cleopatra and the grasping Octavia, whom Dryden actually transports to Alexandria in pursuit of her wayward spouse. But mostly the piece is low-voltage Racine, a painstaking and somewhat plodding demonstration of Antony's inability to put the claims of military ambition and marital duty above an irrational attachment; both Mr Turner, fruity and bold, and Miss Jefford, as emotionally forceful an actress as our theatre possesses, seem somewhat squandered upon it. We wanted to see them as *the* Antony and *the* Cleopatra.

There's more pleasure to be had at Stephen Lowe's *Touched*, from and set in Nottingham. This looks at the 100 days between VE and VJ days from the stance of the back-to-backs and, more specifically, through the eyes of a good-hearted wife who surrenders to an Italian PoW and decides she's 'going to give birth to the future'. Her pregnancy, as it turns out, is a sham, just like the promised renaissance of Britain, and the evening actually ends with her despairing suicide. The symbolism is perhaps rather pat, the connection between public and private events a little forced; and yet the play is fresh, true and even moving. Mr Lowe is younger than me, and I'm too young to remember much about that period except the taste of medicinal orange juice; but, with the help of nice, observant performances from Marjorie Yates, Susan Tracy and others, he made me feel I had experienced at first hand the exhaustion and the optimism, the Brooke Bond tea and Weights cigarettes, the liberation of Belsen, Hiroshima, the Russian advance into eastern Europe. The theatre is apt to go silly with nostalgia whenever it tackles anything set between 1939 and 1945: this keeps its feet and head precisely where nature and art each intended them to be.

A hole in the festivities found me at the TV, watching *Mary, Queen of Scots*: a happy accident, since it included shots of men being whipped through the Edinburgh streets with wooden girdles round their necks, precisely the way I regularly feel when I re-enter that vast, uncharted rain-forest known as the fringe. How to discriminate among the 100-odd offerings, where to start, where end? Well, I much enjoyed Stephen Jeffreys's *Like Dolls or Angels*, a vivid, inventive play about a venomous stuntman-turned-impresario on the skids; would more hesitantly recommend Diane Richardson's *Bugger the Blue Eyes*, a talented but callow piece about a love that daren't tell its name; felt that John Saxby's version of *Future Shock* was another instance of rock opera camouflaging essentially humdrum material, in this case a less-than-trenchant spoof of modern mores; and was a touch disappointed by Pete Atkins's *A & R*, a prolonged if well-informed moan about the pop-music industry, sustained by some peppy music.

So, no new Stoppard parachuting down from the outer ether this year, I fear; no *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern* magically landing in my critical lap; and from the more established authors, mixed success. Peter Terson, so adept at writing for and about the young, has inexplicably given his *Tolly of the Blackboy*, a wordy saga of jaded middle-age, to 18-year-olds palpably incapable of grasping its miseries. Danny Abse's *Gone* is also about a collapsed marriage, but sharper, funnier and performed with much more understanding, though it labours some of its points and seems over-indebted to Pinter, our leading specialist in manipulative games and oblique means of expressing sexual hostility. David Pownall, whose *Music to Murder By* was the happiest memory many of us took from last year's festival, has come up with a stylistically similar entertainment called *Richard III Part Two*, which brings together George Orwell, a pair of eager-beaver salesmen marketing board games called Big Brother and Betrayal, and a strangely benign and hale Crookback, all in the hope of demonstrating something about the distortions of history and the elusiveness of truth: a clever piece, never quite coalescing into a whole.

Finally, C. P. Taylor's *Walter*, a witty, loving picture of a retired comedian trying to make simultaneous sense of his Jewishness, his socialism, his young wife and his old age: as good as anything this underrated dramatist has produced, and beautifully played by Peter Kelly. Taylor may not be Sophocles, any more than Lowe is Aeschylus, Jeffreys Euripides or Abse

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Aristophanes, and it would no doubt be presumptuous of the city council to reverse its philistine policies and actually scoop an Athenian amphitheatre out of the ruins of one of its more redundant hotels; but with such writers willing to sport their wares in and around the Royal Mile, Edinburgh can't yet be, or (more the point) need not become, a down-market Reykjavik.

Television

Ian Hamilton

Left Eye

It's impossible to know what was racing through the mind/minds of whoever it was who decided to screen *Roots, Rock and Reggae* (BBC-2) at the height of the Notting Hill Gate carnival. No doubt the terrific notion was that black chaps would, one way or another, be in the news over the holiday weekend and that the nation would thus be in the correct, amiably foot-tapping mood for sitting through an anthology of Jamaican protest songs. Perhaps some all-seeing viewers were, but those craven enough to give West London the widest of wide berths last Monday may well have found something just a bit stomach-turning in the spectacle of hugely wealthy blacks like Jimmy Cliff and Bob Marley squealing out precisely the complacent, rabble-rousing clichés of down-troddenism that every dusky-skinned young mugger needs to hear if he's to dignify his calling.

The grindingly repetitive rhythms, the mindlessly self-pitying lyrics were just about swallowable if used to soundtrack shots of Kingston's corrugated iron shanty towns: with poverty of *that* order on display, who's going to play critic? But the music doesn't really come from there, except circuitously. If an impoverished Jamaican wants to get on in life, he has to win favour with a record mogul called (I think they said) Jack Ruby, and if Jack succumbs, the lucky vocalist then has to make contact with an ace recording engineer called Scratch, whose role it is to ensure that Jamaican platters are so amateurishly produced that no one abroad can copy them. Ruby and Scratch between them will see to it that their protégé never goes near shanty town again; the worst he'll have to do is sorrowingly shake his bum to songs that tell the world: 'I stand for truths and rights/ That they don't like/So they try to cut me down' and, if interviewed, mumble something to the effect that (just like Jimmy Cliff): 'Yeah, I'd like to see some justice done, y'know.'

The programme's authors kept trying to pretend that reggae was a superb natural distillation of the pains of extreme poverty and not just another well-marketed pop fad, but even they couldn't go on forever showing shots of shanty towns. Once in the recording studios, or in the company of slick Jamaican record distributors, it was pretty well impossible to keep up this wide-eyed act. 'There's not much live music in Jamaica these days – most of it's on disc,' reported the same voice that had earlier been telling us about the genre's eruptive spontaneity. I think the voice sounded slightly puzzled.

'Do you see me as a flamboyant entrepreneur or as a successful businessman?' asked Eric Morley; but sadly he couldn't get a straight answer out of Michael Noakes in *Portrait* (BBC-2). Noakes was touching up Morley's left eye-lid at the time, and was having heavy problems trying to give a beneficent lift to Morley's cunning lower lip. Otherwise, Noakes was almost fawningly indulgent to the Mecca boss's self-admiring patter; as the painter toiled to make Morley look human, Morley toiled to sound so. He told us of the rackets he used to run during the early days of his army service, and how his income was cut by 90 per cent when he got his commission. He confided that he'd never once 'compromised himself' with one of his Miss World contenders; he'd achieved this dizzy state of self-denial by entrusting all the lovelies to the chaperonage of his wife: 'She knows where they all are, every minute of the day and night.' He let on that Jean Rook was quite unfair to put him down for having slicked-back greasy hair; what she *hadn't* said was that his hair was of such delicate texture that it had to be slicked down and greasy – that it might otherwise flop over his left eyelid. And so the trivial chatter stumbled on, our only diversion being to compare Noakes's authoritatively ochre replica with its shifty, rubicund original. Impossible, we noted, to get a really good likeness of a man who suffers from a nasty twitch (left eye).

A shrewd move of Harold Evans's to select *Le Canard Enchaîné* as one of his *Other Voices* (BBC-2). If it is true that Evans felt himself unable to conduct an impartial study of *Private Eye* because they'd been so beastly to him, then *Le Canard* provided him with many a chance to elicit sneering references to the *Eye*'s light-weightness, its bitchiness and triviality, when compared with its eminent French counterpart. *Le Canard* is innocent of ugly motives, it is well-informed as well as being full of 'humeur', it never descends to muck-raking stuff about chaps' private lives, and so on. What we wouldn't give to have a paper like that here! Evans's British Other Voice, incidentally, is the NEW STATESMAN.

We regret that in last week's issue eight lines of Eric Sams's opera column were transposed into Peter Conrad's theatre review.

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Films

Eric Korn

Heart H

The Story of Adèle H. (A) *Odeon Haymarket*

They didn't make any new films this week but Truffaut's 1975 factoid – handsome morose, compelling and tiresome – has a last been released. 'The story of Adèle H. is true', we are told immediately after the Peakey watercolours of Gothic castles and monsters that back the credits: but it isn' clear how we should react to this assertion of the factuality of the extremes o Romantic agony. It's important to Truffau that his heroine, chasing her defaultin lover across the ocean, is also the daughte of Victor Hugo, 'the most famous man i the world', whose shadow hangs porten tously over the film – only his shadov apparently out of deference to the poet family who didn't want the great man por trayed by a mere actor; but it's a shado without much substance to the unprime British audience, who probably won't pene trate the girl's various aliases until sh addresses an envelope to her father. 'Th greatest living poet, like Dante, Homer an Shakespeare' explains a ludicrously woode supporting player, unpatriotically ignorin Tennyson (this in 1863) out of deference the director's nationality.

Truffaut and collaborators wrote th screenplay with the help of Frances Guil who decoded Adèle Hugo's volumino journals: but much must have be sacrificed to simplicity of narrative lir obsessional intensity, and a gloon Tolstoyan assertion of the pathetic folly passion. Adèle met her fate in the form Lieutenant Albert Pinson (Bruce Robinso a kind of leftover Regency buck, all glitt ing uniform and gaming debts, and a cadd way of sipping his drink while a dog sna at his discarded mistress; but his lout egotism is no match for hers. She pursu him from Guernsey to Halifax, No Scotia, with all the desperate strategems the possessed: with rage, madden forgivingness and utter persistence. S causes a false announcement of their m riage to be published, which gets him trouble with his Colonel who improba threatens a court-martial; she denoun him to the father of his intended whc absurdly out of period and character asks, 'If it is as bad as you say, how can y still be his wife?'

Meanwhile, she haunts the local bank her remittance, fends off her anxious fam and uses a ream of paper a week for diary and correspondence, from which, too often, she reads to us, dropping fron recitative to a conversational voice, while

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pen goes scrabble scrabble on the soundtrack. Her last hope is a fraudulent mesmerist who, if he cannot transform her love to hate, might be able to hypnotise the reluctant bridegroom to the altar: when these plans fail, she follows her hussar to an improbably African-looking Barbados.

It is a composition for one instrument, and barely more than one note: the only emotion that pierces Adèle's monomania is an ambiguous grief for her drowned sister – there is a haunting, recurrent image of water-logged clothes like petals in a puddle. Isabelle Adjani is lovely, and can give passionate intensity to a remark about the cost of living in Canada: she was 20 when the film was made, and looks a poignant 14 when she puts on her best dress; but Adèle was 33 and must have been a tough and resourceful lady.

The cause of realism is not served by illustrating 19th century North America with a map showing Louisiana as French, by anachronistic Mounties, or by getting the data of the abolition of slavery wrong. Adèle is permitted to make a few feminist noises about oppressed sisters, but they go for nothing; what remains is a hyperbolical moral tale, intensely self-absorbed, often ravishingly composed in gloomy shades of rust and russet and old gold, with flashes of ironic observation and flashes of bathos. Truffaut calls it 'the autopsy of a passion'; but biopsy would be a better word: a living, malignant hypertrophy is projected with a sombre clarity.

Cookery

Hilary Spurling

Tooth Ake

Rabbits have generally had a bad press in time of famine, pestilence or war, and the last war was no exception; but now that even Chinese communist conies cost almost as much as any other game, I see no reason why they shouldn't regain some of their ancient standing as a table delicacy. Mediaeval chefs served their rabbits in sweet spiced syrups, or on feast days in great gilded, candied and crenellated pie crusts. In the 18th century, rabbit pies contained every imaginable kind of titbit from oysters to artichoke bottoms and cockscombs. Here is Lady Fettiplace's Jacobean recipe for a homelier but no less succulent cold rabbit pie:

To bake a Rabbet

Take the flesh of two rabbets, and a piece of the leafe of a hog, and lay them both together, then with a wooden pestill beat them well together, then season it with some nutmeg and pepper and salt, and some sugar, and then beat it well with the meat, then bake it in a pie, and when it is cold serve it.

A handsome raised pie is what Lady Fettiplace had in mind, but a shortcrust pastry case is easier and tastes just as good. To a pair of rabbits, take about three quarters of a pound of streaky bacon or fat pork ('the leaf of a hog' is the layer of internal fat in a pig, known as 'flare' to London butchers and best kept for raised pies when you need a higher proportion of fat to meat). Simmer the jointed rabbit in water for twenty minutes or so until the flesh is tender enough to strip easily from the bones. Chop the meat and bacon or pork into small pieces, then mince half the mixture and season it with a generous grating of nutmeg, salt, pepper and grated lemon peel instead of sugar. Now arrange the filling in layers in a pie dish, moisten it with a cupful of the reduced cooking liquor and cover with a pastry lid. Decorate as you please with roses, leaves, loveknots, political slogans or graffiti. Cut a hole in the middle of the pie, and cook it for two hours in a slow oven (gas 2-3, 300-325°F), protecting the crust with brown paper in case it burns.

Meanwhile, make a jellied stock from the rabbit bones simmered for two or three hours in cider and water, or in water enriched with three tablespoonfuls of sherry or brandy plus a carrot, an onion, a few peppercorns and a bouquet garni. Strain the stock, reduce it by fast boiling to about half a pint, and pour it gently through a funnel into the pie as it comes from the oven. Leave it to set overnight (add a little gelatine to the stock if you feel at all nervous), and eat with a green salad.

For pudding you might try a bowl of Lady Fettiplace's delicate and faintly oriental 'fresh cheese and cream', which is made from cream cheese beaten with a little milk or cream, flavoured with triple strength rosewater (from any good chemist's) and sweetened with sugar. Chill it well, strew more sugar on it, 'put Creame about it and serve it'. Blackberries or any other soft fruit are good with this, and so are any of the fruit cheeses Jacobean housewives spent the summer making. Plums, apricots, peaches, grapes, cherries, gooseberries, raspberries, barberries, rose hips, pears, apples and quinces, even potatoes, were preserved in thick syrups, made into marmalades stiff enough to cut with a knife, jellied in fancy moulds, or candied whole and dried out in the bread oven. Most preserved fruit was put up in marmalade boxes, to be eaten as sweetmeats (excellent with almost all soft or hard English cheeses), but here is an easy apricot jam, finely flavoured and 'of a good culler':

To preserve Apricocks

Take your fayrest apricocks, pare them and stone them, take their waight in sugar and as you pare them lay them in the dry sugar on by another and cover them with sugar all over, then cover them close with a dish, and let them stand till the next day, then boil them till they bee cleere and the syrrop thicke.

Plums may be done this way as well, and so far as I can see there is no need to peel the fruit first. When you come to cook it, simmer gently so that the sugar is all dissolved before boiling fast, 'till it wamble up like soap suds', and test for setting after a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes at most. Pot in the usual way and, if the thought of so much sweet stuff sets your teeth on edge, here is a convivial remedy:

For the tooth ake

Take halfe a pinte of beare, on spoonefull of honny, halfe a spoonefull of pepper, a spoonefull or 2 of aquavitae [whisky will do], 2 spoonefulls of vinegar, boyle all these together untill it bee thicke, if your tooth bee hollow stoppe him hearewith, but if it bee not hollow then put some of it in a lawne ragge, and howld it to the tooth yt is greeved.

Ballet

Oleg Kerensky

A Word in his Ear

With Norman Morrice about to take up his duties as Director of the Royal Ballet, and with recent performances suggesting some thoughts about its present and future, the brief summer lull provides a welcome opportunity to give him some unsolicited advice. As I suggested recently when reviewing American Ballet Theatre, we sometimes tend to be complacent. All in all, the Royal Ballet is as good as any company in the world, with potentially the most interesting and varied repertoire. But international standards of dancing are rising all the time, and a repertoire has to be constantly refurbished and enriched. Morrice, who has travelled the world extensively in recent years, knows as well as anyone how remarkable the quantity and quality of dancing is now, especially in North America. A week of American Ballet Theatre was enough to show us something of this, even though Ivan Nagy was injured and several leading soloists got no

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chance to do principal classical roles. Similarly the Royal Ballet's last season showed how easily it can become thin on the ground; perhaps one of Morrice's tasks should be to investigate the company's high injury rate. The stars have been overworked and some who are never likely to be stars have been seen repeatedly in leading roles.

Lesley Collier, who is to be the Aurora on the first night of the new *Sleeping Beauty*, has now earned her place as a true ballerina, combining technical assurance with considerable dramatic and emotional range. Ann Jenner, strangely neglected by the management for years, is at last coming into her own. Jennifer Penney has in Manon at least one role which suits her rather naïve manner. Vergie Derman, Monica Mason, and Ria Peri sometimes attempt ballerina roles without really having ballerina physiques or temperaments. Wendy Ellis, apparently one of the management's favourites but certainly not one of the audience's, had a remarkably good shot at Lise in *La Fille Mal Gardée;* perhaps she has a future as a soubrette, but she looks like becoming one of those competent dancers who is never anybody's first choice. On the other hand, Margaret Barbier, a real romantic ballerina, an accomplished comedienne and a firm audience favourite, is still seen only with the touring company (sorry, the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet). Greater interchange between these two groups will undoubtedly be one of Morrice's top priorities.

Traditionally the Royal Ballet is strongest on the female side, but at present things are fairly equal. None of the ladies is an acknowledged prima ballerina assoluta, while Anthony Dowell and David Wall are perhaps more versatile and more popular than any of them. Wall seemed to be doing all the male leads last season, and doing them extremely well. Wayne Eagling appeared as Romeo, Colas and Des Grieux, but his weak acting and stage personality were all too apparent and were scarcely compensated for by rapid spins and high extensions. The Ellis-Eagling *Romeo and Juliet* was one of the dullest ever. Derek Deane, likewise, is little of an actor. David Ashmole, on the other hand, has blossomed as actor and dancer since replacing Stephen Jefferies in the touring company, and should soon be seen again at the Garden.

Meanwhile Jefferies himself, begged back from Canada where he had a brief success with the National Ballet, has joined the male firmament at Covent Garden. Within a few weeks he took over a succession of new roles – *The Four Seasons, Elite Syncopations, Mercutio, Lescaut* – and dazzled in each with his compulsive acting and a new freedom and exuberance in his dancing. This was most notable of all in his Colas, a role he had the chance to perfect in the National Ballet's excellent new production. If the new Jefferies is the result of being neglected by Covent Garden and forced to 'emigrate', maybe it should happen more often.

Certainly guest appearances and exchanges are good both for the dancers who travel and for the companies they visit. One of the reasons for the enormous improvement in British male dancing is the influence of Nureyev, and now of Baryshnikov. Equally these dancers, and Makarova, played crucial roles in raising American Ballet Theatre to its present position, and Nureyev in particular led the Australian Ballet and the National Ballet into the top world league. Moreover the Royal Ballet has a duty to let the British public see the great dancers of the world, as the Royal Opera tries to let us hear the great singers. Of course 'guest artists' can be overdone, especially with a company that has so few performances as the Royal Ballet, but they are essential. More should be done to arrange exchange visits abroad for our dancers.

Increasing the number of performances will be another of Morrice's priorities, though nobody knows how it can be done. More performances in The Tent might be a solution, which I would welcome. Some of my colleagues think the inevitably makeshift element in such performances is unworthy of the Royal Ballet, but the low prices of admission and the big new audience seem to me to outweigh any disadvantages.

Repertoire is the most difficult problem of all. One of the main criticisms of the Royal Ballet recently has been that the same limited list of ballets has been performed over and over again, especially those by MacMillan. There is an enormous backlog of ballets which it would be good to see again. Morrice is on record as saying that one of his first aims will be to do everything possible to persuade Sir Frederick Ashton to make new works for the company. MacMillan hopes to have more time and more inspiration now he is free of directorial responsibilities. No doubt Morrice will eventually create some new works himself – his recent *Smiling Immortal* shone out in Ballet Rambert's recent season. No doubt too he will continue his long (and to me regrettable) enthusiasm for Glen Tetley. Perhaps he will resume his old association with Antony Tudor, the most disgracefully neglected British choreographer. Even if Tudor will not make anything new, how about revivals of *Shadowplay, Lilac Garden* and even *Knight Errant,* to say nothing of *Gala Performance* (it's a much better send-up of classical ballet than Twyla Tharp's over-rated *Push Comes To Shove,* which was notable only for Baryshnikov's brilliant vaudeville act). Tudor's *The Leaves Are Fading* should be acquired, if possible, from Ballet Theatre; it shows off a large number of soloists and its gentle lyricism, musicality and emotion grow on one at each viewing.

One final point: I think Morrice could take a leaf out of the National Ballet of Canada's book and plan choreographic workshops at which new works get a real chance to be seen in good conditions. In Toronto, these workshops have enabled at least two dancers to get worthwhile works into the main repertoire. Ann Ditchburn's *Mad Shadows* was, I think, over-praised because of its Canadian folk-theme and its ambitious dramatic mixture; it struck me a bit like *Witch Boy, Fall River Legend, The Invitation,* and others all rolled into one, but it would be hard to deny its impact. James Kudelka's *A Party,* to Britten's *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge,* was much more modest and almost Tudorish in its gentleness; it had, incidentally, another fine performance by Stephen Jefferies and would be a useful acquisition for a British repertoire.

Weekend Competition

No 2479 **Set by Lean Jono**

Anna Karenina, we understand, is to be made into a West End musical – to be called, perhaps, *The Sound of Muzhik?* Supply us with an aria from this, or any similarly unlikely adaptation; by 16 September.

Result of No 2476 Set by Mrs C. Goddard

Gone With the Wind has spawned *Tara*. We asked you to write the blurb for a sequel to any modern classic.

Report **By Fat Jeff**

As Little Keith and I rode the scenic elevator to Mr Keats's penthouse, our natural queasiness about how the contents of the comp casket would be received was quieted by an inner confidence. You had not disappointed us this week; perhaps you would not disappoint Him. As soon as we glimpsed the great man stretched out on his lounging throne, we knew we were all right. I watched while the lightly clad secretary read out the winners; he smiled, nodded, hummed; benign, wise; judicious, he awarded six pounds each.

If you read Alexander Solzhenitsyn's brilliant masterpiece *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* you'll want to read the astounding follow-up *Another Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich.* This excitingly original novel – written following Solzhenitsyn's flight to the West and first serialised in the *Daily Mail* – is intended to form the second volume of Solzhenitsyn's trilogy *Three Days in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*; it follows Ivan Denisovich Shukhov as he smuggles another piece of hack saw blade into the prison camp, steals another bowl of porridge, builds a wall and denounces the pacifist policies of detente practised by the West. Now, for the first time, Solzhenitsyn dares to reveal the secrets of life in one of the special labour camps manufacturing spare parts for NATO tanks. This startling and sometimes shocking novel is one that you won't want to escape from! JONATHAN M. BATES

Chesterton's much loved character Father Brown makes a welcome return in *Mr Brown and the Big Heist.* Having left the church to marry the beautiful and moody Agatha, formerly Mother Superior of a Carmelite convent, Brown helps finance his high-style living by acting as adviser on security to organisations like Securicor and the Midland Bank. At the start of the novel we find him in New York ready to take on the Mafia who are planning to muscle in on the Catholic church's lucrative fun-raising activities. It's exorcism and orgasms all the way in this tour de force in which a slimmed-down, muscular Mr Brown, possessing all the virility of a man celibate for years, is out to prove himself in every department. The film rights have been sold for a six figure sum with Charles Bronson cast in the lead role. PAUL PASTOR

Twenty years after their appearance in *Lord of the Flies* the boys, now in their thirties, unite for the first time in a hotel on the Isle of Wight. In *Return of the Castaways*

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again meet Piggy, a balding, overweight, highly successful businessman trading in ladies undergarments from his giant warehouse in Camberley; Jack, manic-depressive homosexual, pig farmer and boy scout leader; Ralph, author of an unsuccessful book on survival technique, accompanied by his beautiful wife Laura (providing a welcome female interest the earlier book lacked) who is still waiting for her 15 year old marriage to be consummated. What happens in the final devastating chapter, when a sex-crazed Jack and Laura make a play for Piggy in the hotel's Hawaiian bar, make the incidents in *Lord of the Flies* seem like a cosy garden tea party in comparison.

DOUGLAS ITTO

Lolita was a *succès fou*, a *succès* de *scandale*, an outrageous success by any reckoning. Here is its dazzling sequel: *Forever Lolita*. In this (alas) posthumously published novel Nabokov brings Humbert Humbert and his eponymous nymphet together again. It relates how the famous (or some would say, infamous) pair take off from Cape Kennedy on a tour of the universe in a rocket designed to travel at the speed of light. At this speed, the author explains, time stands still for space travellers, so Humbert achieves his ultimate ambition of enjoying his nymphet for all eternity, secure in the knowledge that she will never age by so much as a single day. Nabokov soars to new heights of imaginative realism in this happy blend of Science Fiction and Sex – a veritable *tour de force* of inter-galactic paedophilia.

'A space probe with a difference' (*Astronauts Weekly*).

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

The Castration of the King begins the story of how the Lord of Mordor persuades Wulfrump, the Smelly Gnome, to set out with 12 companions, including Greezi the Goblin and the strange Skwellch the Shapeless Thing, to retrieve The Ring, once thought mistakenly to be destroyed, from the Hobbits who stole it many years before. Among their many strange adventures is the horrific Rape of Elrond, one episode of which gives this volume its title. The book tells how the surviving elven folk are transformed by Gandalf the Off-White into hideous Pooves. Then there is the encounter which Wulfrump and his friends have with the Nerks, and the strange things which happen to them in Fey, the Land of the Fairies, who make their first appearance in the works of Professor Tolkien. Altogether, these 2,000 fascinating pages will whet every reader's appetite for the forthcoming 39 volumes, which will be published in due course.

MAUD GRACECHURCH

A foretaste of *Happy Ever After*:

Miss Smith (that was): We needs must love the highest when we see it.

Emma Woodhouse: I knew from the first he was my soulmate. He smacks of the soil.

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Mr Knightley: No man is comfortable except with a woman who is plainly his inferior. Our marriages were both entirely suitable in the eyes of the world; and, from this basis, as my relations with my bailiff are necessarily intimate, we found we could proceed to the gratification of our private cravings.

WILLIAM EMPSON

Tony Miles

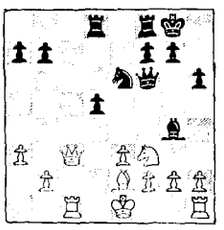
Chess

No 49 **June Problems**

Firstly my apologies for the delay in publishing the results of the last few months' competitions. I hope to catch up soon.

In the June series problem 36 (2r1rk2 / 1q3n2 / 3p1NQ1 / 1p2n3 / p3P3 / P1P5 / 1P4PP / 3R1R1K) had an embarrassingly large number of solutions. 1. N-R7ch, K-K2; 2. N-N5! as I gave is the most clearcut but White has several other ways to win. E.g. (a) 1. N-R7ch, K-K2; 2. Q-B6ch, K-Q2; 3. N-N5! and if . . . R-B1; 4. N x N, N x N; 5. Q x Nch. (b) 1. N-R7ch, K-K2; 2. R x Nch, N x R; 3. R-KB1 (c) 1. N-R7ch, K-K2; 2. R x Nch, N x R; 3. Q-B6ch, K-Q2; 4. N-N5! or even (d) 1. N-R7ch, K-K2; 2. R x Nch, N x R; 3. Q-B6ch, K-Q2; 4. Q x Nch, R-K2; 5. N-B6ch, K-B3; 6. Q-Q5ch, K-N3; 7. Q x QPch, K-R2; 8. N-Q7 though the last is a little laborious.

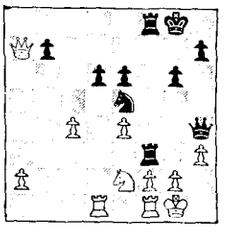
The only difficult one of the set was problem 39. After 1. . . . P-Q5 Queen moves can be dismissed quickly. Black's position is considerably superior after the simple 2. P x P though he may well have better. Also 2. P x P gives Black a raging attack after 2. . . . N-B5.



Consequently we are left with 2. N x P then N x N is met by 3. R x B. So 2. . . . R x N; 3. P x R, B x B; 4. K x B, N x Pch; 5. K-B1 (it is not hard to establish that the White King would soon die from exposure on the Q-file). Q-R3ch; 6. Q-B4, R-B1! 7. Q x Q. R x R mate.

All very neat. Too neat unfortunately for most solvers who, having found this line, were convinced that it was the solution and failed to look for a better defence. Therefore my congratulations to Mr C. McSheehy on being the only entrant who noticed 3. P-B3! Best play thereafter is somewhat obscure. 3. . . . B-R6! 4. R-KN1! (not 4. P x B, Q-R5ch or 4. P x R, B x P; 5. R-KN1, N-B5! with a terrific attack) B x P! (Black must check with his Queen to unpin the Rook) 5. R x B (again not 5. P x R, N-B5), Q-R5ch; 6. K-B1, R-Q4 and Black's position is preferable because of White's weak King-side. Instead the game Miles – Sanguinetti (Sao Paulo 77) continued 3. . . . R-K1; 4. 0-0 (P x B is also possible), N-B5; 5. B-B4! N-R6ch? (best is 5. . . . R x B! and if 6. Q x Q, N-K7ch! 7. K-B2, N x R, so 6. Q x R, N-R6ch; 7. K-R1! B-Q2; 8. P x N, Q x P with some play for the exchange) 6. P x N! R x B; (if 6. . . . B x either P simply; 7. Q x R) 7. Q x Q, R x R; 8. Q-Q4, R x Rch; 9. K x R, R x P; 10. Q x RP and White won.

Mr McSheehy's diligence gains him first prize in the June competition ahead of Messrs Kyprianou and Bradley with consolation prizes to Messrs Abrahams, Pyrich, MacLean, Garfath and Taylor.



Problem 49

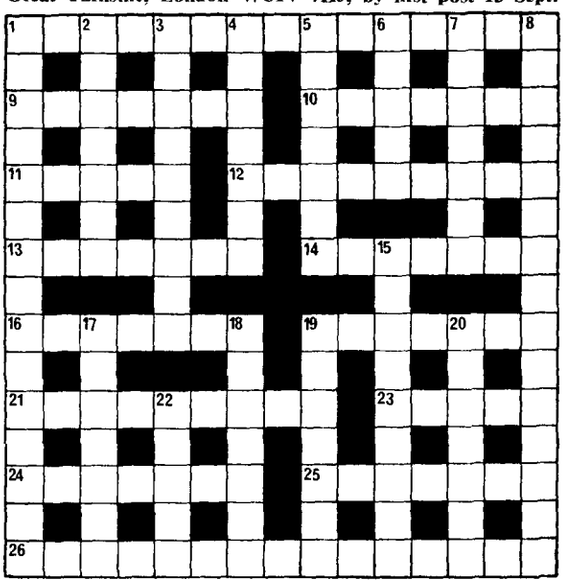
Black to play. How should the game go? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than 14 September.

Solution to Problem 47

1. B-B4! Q x B; 2. R x Bch, K-R1! 3. B x N! Q x Q; 4. R-R8ch! R x R; 5. R x NPch mating.

Weekend Crossword 1231

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1231, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 13 Sept.



ACROSS

1. No player is without a score in this (10, 5).
9. Appeal for devilish wisdom (7).
10. Name of islands in England a manufacturer owns (7).
11. Strange characteristic of beer I enjoy drinking (5).
12. Wrecked fleet ran about a mile for port (9).
13. Goal hit to pieces by giant (7).
14. Food from the dock family (7).
16. Servants have wants without you returning (7).
19. I twice snore incoherently but louder (7).
21. Religion discovered most in his transformation (9).
23. 'Two of far nobler shape —— and tall' (Milton) (5).
24. Somewhere in America it goes in with a girl (7).
25. 'I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is ——' (*Othello*) (7).
26. Strike a master with punishment following, and get into the news (3, 3, 9).

DOWN

1. Auburn chronicler (6, 9).
2. Tobacco for the roof of the mouth? (7).
3. Give pardon when an animal is found in a river (9).
4. Time for a grouse? (7).
5. Universal in a mother or lover (7).
6. Instruments which give me help in return (5).
7. Place of the relative in Buddhist writing (7).
8. Literary work translated by natural secret (10, 5).
15. General rules vain if broken (9).
17. Commando upset in ditch (7).
18. Food container does not go down in shipwreck (7).
19. Country in which a fellow turns up just about there (7).
20. European I stop without anger rising (7).
22. Instruct as individuals at beginning of term (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1229

F	O	R	W	A	R	D	S		C	A	R	P	E	T
A		A		P		E			D		A		O	
L	A	S	T	P	O	S	T		J	A	R	R	O	W
L		H		R		P			I		E		R	
O	P	E	R	A		E	S	P	E	R	A	N	T	O
W		R		I		R			R			T		P
			S	H	A	K	E	S	P	E	A	R	E	
C		C		A		D		A		L		S		
O	V	E	R	L	O	O	K	I	N	G				
M		L			E		C		E		M		A	
P	O	L	Y	N	E	S	I	A		A	P	A	R	T
U		A		I			M		N		N		H	
T	U	R	N	E	R		B	E	A	T	R	I	C	E
E		E		C			N		R		L		N	
R	O	T	H	E	R		S	T	A	Y	L	A	C	E

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Vol. 94 No. 2424

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE (Royal Shakespeare Company) 836 6404. Recorded booking info: 836 5332. 'Romeo & Juliet', 'Much Ado *About Nothing*' in repertory. See daily press for dates & times. RSC also at the Warehouse at Donmar Theatre, week of 4 Sept. Brecht's 'Schweyk', Howard Barker's 'That Good Between Us' (not suitable for children), Bond's 'Bingo'. And at Piccadilly Theatre in 'Wild Oats' & Savoy Theatre in 'Man & Superman'.

CHICHESTER. 0243 86333. 5, 6, 9 Sept. at 7.0. 8, 10 Sept. at 2.0 'The Apple Cart'. 7, 8, 10 Sept. at 7.0 'Julius Caesar'.

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'SCHIZOPHRENIA TODAY' talk by Peggy Pike-Lees of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship, London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terr., W8. Sun 4 Sept. 7.30 p.m. Admission 30p.

THEOSOPHY. Informal Forum on Basic Theosophy. Sun. 4 Sept. 8 p.m. All welcome. S.a.e. for free literature and book list. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2.

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